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A Case Study in Labour Migration  
Reluctant Settlers : Jamaicans  
in the West Midlands : 1945 -1964

MELBERTA EVADNE THOMPSON

Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
in the Centre for the Study of  
Social History at the University  
of Warwick.

June 1988

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**A CASE STUDY IN LABOUR MIGRATION**

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**RELUCTANT SETTLERS**

**JAMAICANS**

**IN THE WEST MIDLANDS**

**1948 - 1984**

**An Ethnography**

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Dedication

To my parents: Violet and Raymond  
and all other first generation labour migrants.

'Anyone who has travelled these roads of the mind  
will find here a guiding thread,  
a bitter memory that stirs,  
the songs of our tribulation,  
and the promise of promises to come'

Stuart Hall

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are extended to the many African-Caribbean people with whom I spoke during the writing of this thesis. I am particularly indebted to those who gave up many precious hours, and the willingness with which they imparted very personal information during the interviews. My impatience continues to be rained with memories of their often gall-like, but malice free recollections of their lives as Black labour migrants in Britain, and vibrant hopes of return rewards.

Often, after returning from a full day's work, with little inclination to work on the thesis, Dr. Tony Mason, my official supervisor would suddenly materialise before my eyes, saying 'Get on with it!' Tony - it helped, and thank you, especially for your patience!

Professor Robin Cohen's natural 'friend of the student' ability, together with his expertise in the subject area, made him an easy target for adoption as my 'unofficial supervisor'. It was, therefore just continuing a tradition when in the last year he was asked and agreed to officially take on the role of second supervisor. Robin, I remain indebted to you!

Some people are born with a natural ability to spur others on, and one of those to whom I shall always be grateful is Mr. Steve Stephenson, Inspector of Education, Birmingham. His constant encouragement to complete, and great sacrifice in reading the first draft, will always be remembered.

This thesis took a long time in writing and has benefitted from numerous help - whether it was encouragement to 'press on', or conversations as I clarified my thoughts. Unfortunately I am unable to thank everyone by name, but this does not devalue the precious memories and life-long gratitude I hold.



## **ABSTRACT**

This is an ethnography of Jamaica Migration to the UK. The purpose of the study is to locate 'migrants' views within the spectrum of migration debates; thereby bridging the gap between theories of migration and the perception/ experiences/stories of migrants. The continued remigration ambitions of the majority of this group of first generation labour migrants, despite forty years of residence in the UK, leads one to posit the thesis that they are reluctant settlers.

The Study explores this thesis, by highlighting and examining the social and economic context of labour migration from Jamaica to the UK during the 1940's to 1965 period. A number of theoretical dimensions are explored, relating to:- (1) Intricate macro and micro dynamic expelling factors in Jamaica; (2) the socio-political-economic factors surrounding the implosion and incorporation of African-Caribbean migrants into the British economy; (3) the employment characteristics of these migrant labourers, in terms of resource utility, actual and potential application within the receiving country, and remuneration for the migrants.

By looking at various theoretical debates and raising sometimes 'controversial' issues - an attempt is made to come to grips with the basic problem of migration when it relates to groups of people who are perceived to be extremely different from the natives.

This study has come at an opportune time as it will inform and contribute to contemporary debates about the increasing politicisation and institutionalisation of racism and xenophobia, particularly in the climate of European Community consolidation towards 1992. This by implication is an attempt to ensure that the migrants' view is not overlooked in the above mentioned preparations and consolidations.

## INTRODUCTION

### The Problem

The debates about migrations or the movement of people from one area or section of the world to another have been long and varied. Without going into the different areas of the debates about whether migration is natural, inevitable, or rational, the author contends that there is a short-fall in that most of these debates are abstract, and often represent the Metropolitan perspective.

The purpose of this study then, is to try and bridge the gap between the theory of migration and the migrant. First, by taking the reader through various theoretical debates and through raising sometimes 'controversial' issues - an attempt is made to come to grips with the basic problem of migration when it relates to groups of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In essence, the study is an attempt to locate the view of the 'migrant' within the spectrum of migration debates.

Second, and of no less importance, is the attempt to inform and contribute to contemporary debates about the increasing politicisation and institutionalisation of racism and xenophobia, particularly in the climate of European Community consolidation towards 1992. This by implication is an attempt to ensure that the migrants' view is not

overlooked in the above mentioned preparations and consolidations.

#### Aims and Objectives of the Study

The Aims of this study are fivefold. Firstly, it is intended to be an overall historical review of mass migration to Britain. Secondly, by using the Case Studies of Afro-Caribbean immigrants to the West Midlands, the thesis sets out to re-examine the characteristics of these labour migrants prior to emigration, their intended and achieved ambitions in Britain, continued links with the sending country, and remigration intentions. Thirdly, the study intends to examine the extent to which this minority ethnic group has settled within the region, and the degree to which mutual co-existence and adaptation within the traditionally, highly industrialised, immigrant utilising West Midlands, has been effected.

Fourthly, the thesis has, necessarily, to be contextualised within the changes and consolidation of ideologies and policies which occurred as a response to large scale black immigration and inevitably discusses the adverse effects of these. It is not the intention, however, to portray black people as passive victims. On the contrary, a tradition of resourcefulness is revealed through the physical and psychological constructs which they have built in their bid for self-preservation.

Finally, as an ethnographic study, the important aspects of this work is not meant only to reflect the above stated aims and objectives, it is also meant to empower these labour migrants by the ways in which their accounts will be used to inform, and hopefully 'transform the content of history' by providing their viewpoint, 'a viewpoint from below.' Perhaps, most important of all this is a way of giving 'back history to the people in their own words'.<sup>[1]</sup> This is particularly crucial where informants are allowed to gain access to the final product. Thereafter, at least in theory, their histories can be used to reinforce positive cultural attributes as well as self-correct through inter-active feedback of the material.

In short, then, to quote Thompson :-

[Ethnographic history] should provide a challenge, and understanding which helps towards change. And for the historian who wants to work as a socialist the task must be not simply to celebrate the working class as it is but to change its consciousness ... [this type of history] provides the means for a radical transformation of the social meaning of history.<sup>[2]</sup>

Through this study then, an attempt is made to liberate subject groups (in this case Afro-Caribbean peoples) from the muzzle which purely quantitative and documentary studies often place on their ability to contribute to scholarly debates about their migration experience.

Importantly too, these contributions can be used to challenge established accounts, and in the situation as exists in contemporary Britain where so many of the 'host' agents of information have been found guilty of distorting

the facts whether consciously or unconsciously - due to varying anti-black sentiments - this is crucial.

#### METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

##### Stages of the Study

Initially, two stages were envisaged in this study. The first involved in-depth interviews of 50 Jamaicans in the West Midlands and immediate environs, spanning the range and type of immigrants from Jamaica. These would be integrated into the study and used where possible to indicate migrants' own experiences and perceptions of their movement to Britain.

The second stage involved using the interviews together with existing secondary data to investigate and forward analyses of the dynamic processes in the Caribbean/U.K. migration. Further, examination of the labour characteristics of migrants prior to immigration would be used to pursue a debate on under-utilisation and skill wastage involved in labour 'implosion' from peripheral to core industrial economies.

Information obtained in the interviews, indicated the further migration ambition of most informants and as a consequence of this, it was decided that an actual visit to Jamaica would be profitable. This, it was thought, would enable a thorough investigation of a very small sample of returnees, as well as give some indication of the actual, and perceived support role of sending and host governments in the return migration process.

Location and Method of Contact

I decided that because the sample size was so small, attempts to choose in any kind of systematic way would have been meaningless, therefore, there were no set sampling procedures. I approached people as randomly as possible and solicited their assistance by going to the major areas of Afro-Caribbean settlements in the Handsworth/Winson Green, Edgbaston, Oldbury areas. A few door to door contacts were made, but by and large I used mostly personal street and bus approaches in the main shopping and transportation contact areas. Many of my contacts were made in the The Bull Ring Shopping Centre, because of its high concentration of shoppers from all ethnic groups, and attractiveness to all age range, including pensioners, who seek to supplement their small allowances by purchasing the relatively cheap market commodities. These latter contacts led me outside of the areas mentioned above - namely, Balsall Heath, Saltley, West Bromwich and Bearwood (the last two actually located in the borough of Sandwell, although at the time of Afro-Caribbean immigration these areas were in Birmingham).

On the first contact, I explained to the potential informant what the study was about, stressing the importance of his/her contribution and importantly, because the prepared questionnaires were so extensive, I felt duty bound to inform the individual that it was likely to take several hours and that a tape recorder would be used. This was then followed by a fixed appointment at which the first part was

used to explain the nature of the study and to answer any questions /anxieties the informant might have had. It was ethically necessary to reiterate the use of a tape recorder throughout the interview and to explain the rationale for this.

If they agreed, the interview would then proceed, although on a number of occasions, informants asked for a few days to think about the matter. All the individuals who had initially agreed to be interviewed, went through with it, bar one gentleman who, when I arrived to speak with him said:- 'I change mi mind, people should keep Dem own business to dem self'. I felt it would defeat the purpose of the study to try and persuade him to comply with the arrangements. On the whole, people seemed genuinely keen to assist in this study, and importantly, in retrospect, none could be classified as '...biased individuals who tend to attract a researcher's attention most easily, and who are often more willing to give information or to express their frustration and grievances.'<sup>[3]</sup> To be frank, the one individual whom I met and who seemed a likely candidate for the above description, eventually refused to agree to an interview, saying the only time he would give such information, is when he was at the Airport, about to leave the country - as he had no intention of returning to Britain and, therefore could not be victimised by the police. Whether this was an indication of his lack of faith in me to observe confidentiality or a belief in the omnipresence of the police, I do not know.



## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

### Ethnographic Method

Ethnography is a field of study which is basically concerned with describing and analysing cultures. These may be the researcher's own or other cultures. One of its greatest contributions is the way in which it can be used to sensitise others about the similarities and diversities in different cultures. In ethnographic studies the researcher must allow flexibility to incorporate responses which may not have been anticipated. Such notions of 'natural' or 'logical' are often found to be culturally relative.

Thompson believes traditional historians to be eclectic - choosing to gather evidence from various sources to construct their own interpretations. In theory, therefore, ethnography should pose few problems. For some, however, it will be necessary to overcome what Thompson refers to as 'fear of the social experience of interviewing' and the need to 'come out of the closet and talk with ordinary people.' For Thompson, this outcome is inevitable. He stressed:-

... Time will temper all these feelings; old will be succeeded; and a widening number will themselves know the positive social and intellectual experience of oral history.

The discovery of 'oral history' by historians which is now under way is, then, unlikely to be obscured. And it is not only a discovery but a recovery. It gives history a future no longer tied to the cultural significance of the paper document. It also gives back to historians the oldest skill of their own craft<sup>[4]</sup>

By marrying qualitative and documentary research - using quantitative analysis where possible, a fuller research base can be established.

### Phenomenological Method

This methodological approach would ~~see~~ social structures as essentially a human construct. Instead of regarding people as passively responding to environmental factors, they are seen to create their own environment 'through a process of interpreting and giving meaning' to surrounding structures. In order to fully understand a social event, the phenomenologist believes it is relevant to link the interpretations and meanings attributed to events by all the people involved in particular social phenomena.

This differs greatly from the traditional 'structural-functional' approach to the study of society. Here, society is seen as a system of inter-dependent functioning structures. These structures have the ability to inculcate values which are relevant for retention of the status-quo. Any diversion from the dominant inculcated behaviour is regarded as a flaw in one of the socialising (inculcating) structures - be this faulty educational formal and non-formal educational systems. This tradition would therefore examine societal structures, often using methods akin to those by physical scientists. Thus, Vulliamy emphasises:-

The difference between the 'natural' and the 'social' worlds are minimised. In the attempt to be 'value-free', the emphasis is on quantification and measurement. Statistical data from survey questionnaires may be used to test sociological 'laws' which can make predictions and statements about the social phenomena. Methods of inquiry such as participant observation ... which do not produce quantifiable results, are regarded as less satisfactory. They are felt not to be 'objective'.

~~..... and development of an ..... approach~~  
 Approach

In introducing Manuel Gamio's work on the Mexican Immigrants, Robert Redfield [7] pointed out that:-

..... The more critical experiences and situations..... are not likely to be reported objectively. Here what we get is the person's own view of the situation: how he looks back on it now and rationalises upon it for his own benefit and that of the interviewer. Then it is just these viewpoints and rationalisations that become the scientific data. If we know that they are rationalisations, they are useful in explaining and anticipating conduct because people act, not only because things are so, but because they think them, or assume them, to be so.

In circumstances as the above, where individuals engage in subjective rationalisations, he/she is unfolding to the interviewer - albeit unintentionally - very intimate details to do with psychological or physical constructs which have been pertinent in aiding personal accommodation within his/her new and often hostile environment.

While caution is adjured in relation to informants explanations/interpretations, it must be emphasised that researchers are not immune from subjectivity. Preiswerk and Perrot [8] in their work on 'Ethnocentrism and History', wrote:-

... even the most honourable scholar cannot pretend to eliminate at the outset, ... the distance separating him from the object of his studies. A multitude of sources of distortion, often nonconscious, will remain.

When one defines history as a 'catalog of true events,' or when one proclaims that the first duty of the historian is 'to establish the truth,' one is referring to objectivity in the accepted sense of intellectual honesty, rather than in an epistemological sense, which postulates the adequate mental representation of the object. The difference is all-important, for even when the historian is satisfied with his professional ethics and applies the rules of proper behaviour established by his discipline to attain the 'truth', considerations stemming from the study of knowledge in general are proof of the limits of this mental reproduction of 'reality.' Since the object can only be known by a human subject, the pursuit of objectivity must consist in detecting all possible sources of distortion .... It includes 'disassociation from the "I" in its egocentric subjectivity', and, one might add: the severance of the 'us' from our ethnocentric subjectivity.'

Objectivity, as, has been stated is very difficult to attain, but its pursuit should not be used to preclude the deeper understanding of phenomena, which informants can contribute through cognisance of their explanations, and this can only be achieved through ethnographic studies.

In a discourse by Sheila Patterson [9] on the pros and cons implicit in studies involving researchers and respondents from different ethnic backgrounds, (particularly black and white), Patterson concluded:-

In general, it is clear that both white and coloured researchers into race relationships suffer from disabilities of one kind or another. The coloured investigator's easier identification with one section at least of the coloured community or group is partially offset by suspicion of him on class and ethnic grounds within that group, and by the relative unco-

operativeness or even hostility which he may meet from white officials and certain white individuals.

The writer continued:-

The white investigator of colour-contact situations in which there is any friction is unlikely ever to gain full acceptance from any section of the coloured group, but will have a better chance of establishing a fair degree of rapport with all sections.. He will, on the other hand, find contacts with white officialdom and individuals relatively easy, unless he is too emotionally linked with the cause of the minority or migrant group.....an English-speaking European in Britain, will be able to establish a better rapport with both groups than will an indigenous investigator of either colour. In present circumstances, however, the same could not be said of a 'foreign' non-white investigator studying race relations in South Africa or the Deep South or even, perhaps in Britain. Such an investigator would be identified with the migrant or subordinate group and his investigations would be regarded as a breach of the behaviour expected of his group.[9]

In a critique of Patterson's work from which the above quote was taken, Neville Maxwell<sup>[10]</sup> accused her of being patronising and arrogant "... casting black people into convenient moulds as (her) whims and fancies dictate and the black man is expected to go on submitting to this involuntary transmutation of his image"

Maxwell went on to stress: "Clearly, African history and literature must be written by African historians and writers and African Sociology by African sociologists. As long as Europeans are allowed to write and speak with authority on African affairs, this distortion wilful or innocent of our history, culture, standards and values will continue."

The above quotations have been included, not to advocate research colonisation without wishing to become involved in further condemnation of Patterson, a plea is being made for ethnographers belonging to a similar cultural background to the group being studied. In support of this, Saville-Troike wrote:-[11]

One of the advantages of studying one's own culture, and attempting to make explicit the systems of understanding which are implicit, is that ethnographers are able to use themselves as sources of information and interpretations....this perspective to the study of culture acknowledges the member of the society as the repository of cultural knowledge, and recognises that the ethnographer who already possesses this knowledge can tap in introspectively to validate, enrich, and expedite the task of ethnographic description

Ethnographic researchers of their own ethnic group can, therefore explore 'subtle interconnections of meaning in ways that the outsider could attain only with great difficulty, if at all'.[12] (Saville-Troike : 111) In the role of participant and observer, 'insiders' such researchers are able to verify and correct imprecise or inappropriate generalisations.

The above debates have emphasised the theoretical perspective of this study. It should be looked at as a historical overview, an ethnography and a phenomenological study, seeking to encompass the above fields and bridging various academic disciplines. It is, nonetheless, a study in totality, and a view from 'below'.

Endnotes : Introduction

- [1] Thompson, Paul : The Voice of the Past (Oral History), (1978 : 2-18), Ppms. Oxford University Press.
- [2] Ibid (1978 : 17)
- [3] Patterson, S. Dark Strangers : (1963 : 27). Ppms. Tavistock Publications Ltd.
- [4] Thompson, : Opcit. Pps. 62-62
- [5] Vulliamy, G. Sociology Theory, 'Society Today 4' (1976 : 2)
- [6] Robert Redfield's - Introduction to Gamio, Manuel : The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant (1971 : xii-xiii)
- [7] Preiswerk, R. & Perrot, D. Ethnocentrism and History. Africa, Asia and Indian America in Western Textbooks. (1978 : xvii), Ppms. New Publishers, U.S.
- [8] Patterson, Sheila : Dark Strangers (1963 : 35), Ppms. Tavistock Publications Ltd.
- [9] Ibid.
- [10] Maxwell, N. - The Power of Negro Action : (1965 : 12-13) Ppms. Neville Maxwell, U.K.
- [11] Seville-Troike, Muriel : The Ethnography of Communication - An Introduction. (1982 : 110)
- [12] Ibid (Pps. 111)

## CHAPTER 1

### BRITAIN A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRANTS

#### Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the study of migration from a historical perspective, making reference to socio/political/economic ideologies of migration. Additionally, an examination is undertaken of the phenomena of mass immigration of Irish and Jewish labour to England, and the functionalist nature of their injection at various stages of mass economic development and industrial transition. The rationale underlying the use of ex/colonial labour during Britain's post-war reconstruction is considered next. Finally, a historical review of reactions to the immigrant groups will be undertaken - examining phenomena such as xenophobia, nationalism and 'capitalist manipulation', which have all been advanced as 'reasons' for anti-immigrant feelings.

#### "Untrammelled Movement of People"

Britain has always been a migrant receiving country and seems to have prided herself on the fact that many religious and political refugees found shelter on these shores. The Huguenots and other Protestant refugees from Western Europe during the 16th and 17th century, are often referred to as having both found refuge in this country and, at the same time, contributed to life enhancement, through the introduction of new skills and forms of culture. These immigrations, however, were a relative trickle, when compared to later movements into the country during the



nineteenth and twentieth centuries of Irish, Jewish and Commonwealth peoples - the latter being the last mass movement into Britain.

Such movements are not however, novel, neither are they peculiar to Britain. For several centuries, people have been prompted to leave their homelands to seek cultural and economic improvements or simply because of the basic will to survive.

Conversely, economic growth in many receiving countries has depended on immigration - at least at certain stages of economic development. In earlier times, intermittent plagues, famines, wars and other disasters contributed to low growth levels throughout the world. Hence the transferral of human resources became a means of achieving national development, whether on a military, economic or social level. As is discussed later, often the legislature at time directly is brought into force to regulate the flow of labour inter/intra political economies. Collard<sup>[1]</sup> in commenting on Johnson's 'Internationalist Model' approach to migration wrote:-

The argument is that freedom of factor movements across national boundaries tends to produce equal marginal value productivities everywhere and therefore enables a necessary condition for the maximisation of world income to be satisfied. If it is in people's own interests to move, then their money gain indicates the money value of the consequent increase in world income.<sup>[2]</sup>

Migration, therefore, is seen to be related to economic growth - either as a pre-requisite or a concomitant factor.

The logical conclusion of such arguments is a complete open-door policy on migration, which is in keeping with a free-market competition. Labour, as a factor of production should be available for competition in the international market. The converse of this is that the labourer should be free to choose the most competitive bidder! National barriers are therefore a contravention of the 'true' capitalist philosophy.

Petrus stresses that:-

In order to penetrate markets, international capital has at hand a variety of legal, formal and official networks which it can exploit....

For international labour, there is neither a comparable network, nor an international movement which could formulate policies to protect its interests

Thus she stressed:-

The greater the motivation to move out of the periphery, and or the greater the desirability of the jobs available in the core, the more desperate or innovative will be the devices used by workers to penetrate national boundaries.[3]

The link between migration and economic development had long been recognized in Western Europe. Throughout Britain's colonising days, under-population was seen to retard plantation development, the general growth of the colonies, and in turn, the growth of the core economy. Vast numbers of peoples were transported from Europe, Africa and Asia to develop and maintain a plantation economy in the West Indies and elsewhere.

E. P. Thompson, in commenting on the UK wrote that the first half of the nineteenth century was characterised by a period of chronic underemployment, This was caused not only from immigration of Irish economic refugees, but was mostly the

result of domestic reproduction and labour redundancy due to changes in production methods, a rapid demographic growth whereby Britain's population increased from 10.5 millions in 1801 to 18.1 millions in 1841 and thereafter continued to increase from natural birth rates, lower mortality and immigration. The transition from an agrarian to an industrial society resulted in a higher degree of mechanisation on a factory, rather than a domestic system, this meant unemployment for large numbers of home-workers.

Throughout the nineteenth century, there were sporadic attempts by the British working classes to redress inequalities occasioned by the Industrial Revolution and exploitations inherent in capitalism. Movements such as Swing Riots, Luddism, Chartism, and Trade Unions, were all efforts by workers to redress some of the imbalances in society. Most of their attempts were futile. They could not hold back mechanisations, nor were they able to secure fair employment conditions for themselves. As a result, this is the reality for many Third World workers today, they had to resort to emigration in a bid for economic survival and enhancement. Large numbers of migrants from Britain, went to foreign countries where they believed their chances of economic and social advancement were more secure. Some reacted to the trade cycle while others, such as artisans sought employment abroad where their skills were scarce and would be better rewarded financially.

It is true that emigration had been a feature of Britain well before the nineteenth century. For example, there had

long been continuous out-migration of Britons both to seek 'cultural enlightenment', and to partake in colonising activities. During the nineteenth century, however, migration occurred on an unprecedented scale from Europe, to America and Canada and later to Australia. Between 1843 to 1852, approximately 214,000 migrants left Britain mainly for the U.S.A., and colonies[4].

Through emigration, it was hoped that a duality of purposes would be achieved. First, Great Britain could retain the societal fabric - by getting rid of 'degenerates', a term used to include many genuinely unemployed people as well as political activists, and others believed to be a threat to the status-quo. Secondly, surplus population, would be more profitably employed in the colonies. Migration was resorted to as a panacea for curing the degenerative ills believed to be associated with 'under-utilised' and unemployed labour. For, as Arnold White had stressed of the poor in 1887, and in support of his plea to sterilise the unfit:-

Freely undertaking the responsibilities of marriage, the population is more freely replenished from the unfit than from the healthy and energetic elements of the electorate. It is monstrous that the weak should be destroyed by the strong. How much more repugnant is it to reason and to instinct that the strong should be overwhelmed by the feeble, ailing and unfit.[5]

As well as ridding the country of these people, the transmigration of labour would offer people a chance to 'improve' themselves and at the same time, as ex-patriates, they would uphold the interests of their sovereign country.

Nonetheless, emigration during this period was not on a scale to redress the dislocations which a changing economy had engendered. Excess agricultural labour tended to migrate to commercial and industrialising centres in search of employment. This migration contributed to the growth of towns, and highlighted inadequacies in contemporary public welfare provisions. Excess demands on almost all the facilities caused by a rapidly expanding population - through natural increase and rural de-population, exacerbated adverse living conditions.

These problems were exacerbated with the inflow of Irish and later Jewish immigrants, and had not been fully addressed even in the post-1945 period with the inflow of migrant labourers from ex/colonial countries. Thus, immigrants did not create adverse conditions - these existed before the bulk of migrants arrived.

Mass movements of people have continued to take place in unprecedented proportions, due largely to the extensive economic and social changes which have taken place on a world-wide scale, and today:-

International migration can be viewed as one more element in an increasing complex set of exchanges (trade, technology, capital, culture) between countries that possess differential power ... (economic, military, political). This growing interdependence between nations is associated with expansion of the international economic system<sup>(9)</sup>

Europe remained a region of emigration in the post-1945 period as people moved once more to land-surplus countries such as those mentioned previously, or to North America

which by now was much more economically vibrant than Europe. At the same time, European countries continued to attract large numbers of immigrants - many of whom were actively recruited or passively accepted by the receiving countries.

The above gives some indication of the conditions existing in nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain which created forces of expulsion for the vast outward movement during the period. Until the 1840s, Britain had never experienced mass immigration. The Poor Laws had provisions to restrict entry of immigrants who seemed likely to become a liability on the State; however, until the Aliens Act of 1905, Britain was virtually a non-restrictive immigration country.

#### Pre-1940s Mass Immigration to Britain

##### The Irish

The 1840s and 50s witnessed mass migration from Ireland into Britain. Irish land was extensively sub-divided and largely owned by English absentee landlords. As the majority of people had to depend on 'the land' for food and employment, peasants found they had to pay very high rents for small plots of land. In order to meet their debt, they grew cereals as cash-crops, while they themselves subsisted on inferior food such as potato. In periods of potato crop failure, there was much suffering from diseases, starvations and mortality, and these gave impetus to large scale emigration.

Irish migrants had been coming to Britain since the 17th century as seasonal agricultural workers and navvies. Some of these migrants remained after the season or contract had ended to become permanent residents. Lawton estimates that between 1830 to 1844 approximately 672,000 migrants left Ireland; many went to the US, but a large proportion remained in Britain to form 1.8% (291,000) of the population of England and Wales and 4.8% (126,000) of that of Scotland. By 1851 these proportions were 2.9% (520,000) and 7.2% respectively and by 1861 had increased to 3% (602,000) and 6.6% (20,000) respectively. Lawton further suggests that between 1841 and 1851, the number of Irish in England and Wales increased by 79% (from 291,000 to 520,000) and again by 1861 it increased by 16% to 602,000. In 1861, 3% of the entire population were Irish by birth.[7]

On arrival in Britain, the migrants settled in greater proportion in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and London, as well as certain areas in Wales, Scotland and Midland regions. By 1841, Irish migrants already formed a significant total of the population in various regions, totalling approximately 4% of the population, in Salford over 7%, Bradford 5%, Manchester 12%, Wigan 8% and Liverpool as many as 17% of the total population was Irish[8].

On entering the English economy, Redford observed that:-

A less attractive class of work in which the Irish were largely engaged consisted of jobs which Englishmen disliked because the work was dirty, disreputable, or otherwise undesirable. Much of this was petty trading and huckstering, keeping lodging houses and beer houses .... Many of the Liverpool Irish were employed in soap-boiling; while in Bermondsey the Irish were chiefly employed in fellmongers' and tanners' yards, or in glue factories.<sup>[9]</sup>

Throughout the country, Irish migrants were forced to take employment which the native workers would not do. Cornwall Lewis commented that the work undertaken by Irish were of 'the roughest, coarsest and most repulsive description, and requiring the least of skill and practice'<sup>[10]</sup>. There were, however, two areas in which Irish workers were strong competitors and consequentially became target of hostilities by workers who felt threatened by their presence in the market. These were navvying and weaving.

A witness before the Select Committee on Emigration in 1827 commented that of every hundred men employed in road or canal construction, possibly 90 would be Irish. In addition, manufacturers often recruited directly from Ireland for such workers, and often they were paid more than local or Scottish workers, mainly because of their willingness to undertake more dangerous and unpleasant work. In 1850, of 4,000 men employed on a railway construction, 3,700 were Irish navvies. Most of the antagonism in navvying was between Irish and Scottish workers, the latter regarding Irish as rivals<sup>[11]</sup>.

In the weaving industry, installation of power loom meant that Irish, unskilled labour could be more extensively utilised, whereas in hand-loom weaving the job could only be done by skilled artisans. It was alleged that due to the



immigrants willingness to accept lower wages, they became the leaders in the 'career downhill', and tended to pull other weavers down with them. And yet, Mitchell, one of the Commissioners in the 1839-40 Report commented:-

.... if every ounce of foreign manufactured skill goods were to be excluded from the Kingdom, and if the British public, in lieu of such goods, were to purchase our own manufacturers, it would not put an end to the alternations of prosperity and distress, and affect a greater number of individuals in proportion to the magnitude of the trade<sup>[15]</sup>.

On one level it could be assumed that by over-saturating the market and being willing to accept lower wages, Irish immigrants kept wage rates down. Nevertheless, there were other factors combining to depress the weaving industry and extensive unemployment would inevitably have occurred. These labour migrants' presence speeded up the process, but did not cause the industry's decline.

Moreover, no amount of competition against indigenous labour should be used to cloak the fact that these labour refugees/migrants entered the economy usually at the lowest level and to undertake the types of work which local workers were reluctant to do, as Miles has pointed out:-

... Evidence overwhelmingly supports the contention that the Irish immigrants of the nineteenth century and their descendants constituted an important part of the semi- and unskilled fraction of the growing working class. With the help of their labour power was built the vital capital infrastructure of English industry in particular the railways, canals, roads and docks<sup>[16]</sup>.

Irish labour, therefore played a structurally important role during the consolidation of industrialism in nineteenth century England. On a micro level their role was at times

competitive against fellow working class indigenous workers and this tended to cloak the essential contribution they were making simultaneously - on a macro level. This dual role is often characteristic of imported labour.

One of the most significant factors in the study of any wave of migration, is the volume and distribution over time, in which the movement takes place. The greater the volume of immigrants, the more alarmist the reactions of the receiving society to the in-flow, particularly if existing conditions in the receiving country is such that a section of the society is apt to regard immigrants as competitors for their livelihood, and therefore a threat to their economic and social way of life. The inflow of Irish and later Jewish immigrants into Britain was minimal when compared to that occurring in the U.S.A. where labour migrants came from all over the world. Nevertheless, because both U.S.A. and Canada had vast areas of land and economic opportunities unharnessed, the pressure of mass inflow would not have been as acute as it was in Britain, where by the 1840s there was already a population problem and urban over-crowding.

### Jewish Immigration

Like the Irish, mass immigration during the 1880s was not the first contact the receiving society had with Jews. Jewish immigrants had been coming to Britain and America since the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In 1850s there were already 35,000 Jews in Britain and by 1880 this number had risen to 50,000. In the period 1881 to 1905, over one million Jews left Eastern Europe for the West and of this number, approximately 100,000 resided in Britain. Because of the non-restrictive immigration policies, Jews were able to migrate to Britain. Thus by 1905, there were more than 200,000 Jews residing in Britain and this accumulation took place roughly over a fifty year period between 1850s and 1905[14].

Pogroms in Eastern Europe had - for a long time - resulted in expulsion of Jews. Their persecution increased greatly when they were held responsible for the assassination of the Russian Tsar, Alexander II which provided further anti-Semitic fuel. Thus, enactment and implementation of the May Laws in 1882 prohibited Jews from engaging in business activities on Christian holy days. They could not own lands or reside in agricultural areas and their ability and rights of residence were restricted to the 'Pale' - an exclusive area for Jews. They were excluded from obtaining education in certain areas and prevented from attaining equality in Russian society. It was no wonder, therefore, that Jewish people took advantage of cheap shipping and railway facilities to leave Eastern Europe. Lipman suggests that

waves of Jewish immigration tended to fluctuate according to economic conditions in Britain. However, because the majority entered the country during a period of economic decline, reflecting the relative 'might' of expulsion over implosion, this gave rise to allegations that they caused the depression of trade and wages.

The skills which these later migrant labourers/refugees imported, determined that they were heavily engaged in tailoring, hawking and general dealing, boot and shoe trades and cabinet making trades. Their preponderance in these areas gave rise to allegations that Jews were replacing English workers, flooding the markets and causing deteriorations in various areas of trade, as well as effecting pauperisation of traditional workers. Hence a demand that the government should do something quickly to stop the alien paupers from landing on British shores. Such pleas tended to ignore the fact that parallelism rather than integration more correctly represented the Jews entry to the British labour market. Unlike Irish immigrants, Jews did not directly replace traditional workers. By setting up small work-shops and using extensive division of labour they were able to greatly increase productivity. As such, there is some validity in the accusation that - in tailoring at least - Jews competed with provincial firms in the manufacture of wholesale clothing for working class and colonial markets. Even this comment needs to be qualified, however, because they mostly supplied the poorest sections of the home market, who previously were catered for by German imported clothing. It was, therefore, as much German, as British

workers who bore the brunt of Jewish intervention in this sector. Jews were accused of prolonging the sweating system by their willingness to do any work, at any price and under\* very unhygienic conditions. Sweating was thought to inhibit industrial evolution in the clothing trade. This was particularly significant in the late 1800's when due to avoid competition from the U.S. and Germany there was pressure on British industrialists to adopt more extensive and sophisticated technology in a bid to combat foreign competition.

The cheaper manual labour is above machinery, the greater the incentive to defer mechanisation. On the surface this would tend to give weight to the argument that the presence of large numbers of immigrants inhibited technological change at a crucial stage in Britain's industrial transformation. It is important to acknowledge, however, that both the Irish and Jews entered employment sectors which were in stages of transition and as Saul<sup>[15]</sup> believes that the process of industrial change is complex and misleading in that transitional changes are often interpreted as decline.

Schmichen<sup>[16]</sup> too noticed this tendency in connection with industrial changes which were occurring at the period of mass immigration of 18th century Jews. He felt that the organisation of industrialisation, and the disruptions caused thereby, led to various responses both by the government and working people at large, implicit in which were strong anti-semitic retorts. This was due to the inability of the indigenous groups to comprehend the ramifications of economic change at the time. After all, the whole internationalisation of trade and expanse of industrialism were beyond contemporaries experience.

Rather than being an 'Age of Equipoise', the nineteenth century seemed to have been an age of upheaval and continuous instability, an age of rigid class stratification and cleavage, a period of great achievement, largely due to labour exploitation both colonial and domestic.

#### Post-1940 Prosperity and Labour Importation

It was inevitable that the post-war economic expansion in Europe would have acted as a magnet to people from less prosperous regions of the world. As Peach pointed out 'It is not that poverty is new in the South, it is that industrial prosperity, on its present scale is new in Northern Europe'[17]. Further, if we accept Petras's observation that 'There is a tendency for labour to seek out for itself that location where its labour power can be exchanged for the most desirable wages and living conditions'[18], and that the 'greater the desirability of the jobs available in the core, the more desperate or innovative will be the devices used by workers to penetrate national boundaries', then maybe there was some degree of inevitability in post 1945 immigration to Britain.

Despite job availability, however, these years of the 1940s were not ones in which unhindered movements of people were tolerated. Unlike the periods of mass migrations of the 1800s, political and legal barriers in this century have been as effective as actual physical blocks (such as the Berlin Wall), in controlling international movements of people. Today, countries only open their barriers to immigrants for specific reasons occasionally stimulated by

humanitarian motives (to help refugees of various kinds), but, more commonly, for economic benefits to the receiving country. In Britain during the years following the last war, these benefits were perceived as taking the form of a direct injection into the core economy, rather than the previous transferral of labour from core to peripheral areas, or from one to another peripheral colonial area in the pursuit of amassing raw materials and other forms of wealth, for development of the metropolitan country.

While most receiving countries in the industrial block saw a need to recruit labour in the post-war reconstruction, this labour inflow was usually on a controlled basis through official or semi-official schemes. In Germany, for example, there was strong collaboration between the sending and receiving countries to ensure that the right 'calibre' of workers were chosen.

In the case of Commonwealth citizens into Britain, it had been assumed that the government adopted a *laissez-faire* attitude with regard to their entry, dispersal within the country and settlement patterns. This alleged laxity on the part of the government was thought to be due to the fact that these immigrants were citizens of the UK, and therefore, were treated as a type of 'internal movement' - within the same political economy. However, this *laissez-faire* attitude was more apparent than real. There were some direct recruitment of workers in the Caribbean by British 'ambassadors', but, in the main, the mere knowledge of Britain being available for immigration and employment

opportunities - whether conveyed by word of mouth, or advertisements in the local newspaper, was enough to stimulate would-be migrants to leave their homelands and travel to the UK. This enthusiasm was - unknown to would-be labour migrants - often frustrated by official procrastination based on instructions from Britain that passports should only be issued if proof of employment were available<sup>[19]</sup>.

Like their predecessors, Irish and Jews, these immigrant's presence in various parts of the country, served to highlight many inherent inadequacies of the social welfare provisions of the day. Immigrants were often held responsible for over-crowding in the housing and school space, as well as a drain on other welfare services such as hospitals. Yet these problems had existed long before Commonwealth immigrants entered the scene.

#### Immigration and 'Nation' Politics

The impact of mass immigration into Britain served to expose various latent contradictions in the society, both at an ideological and practical level. Many of the accusations against the early Irish and Jewish immigrants, culminating in the 1905 Aliens Act itself - can be seen as a direct transgression of the principles of 'laissez-faire', and the leading ideologies of the late 18th and nineteenth centuries. These contradictions must be viewed against a changing society where even the ideals of political economy - the premise upon which the whole economy of the nineteenth century was built - was being questioned.



Not only did immigration during the post-war period emphasise social inadequacies in British Society, it served to expose the many inconsistencies in the nation's attitudes to issues such as race. The presence of large numbers of black labour migrants forced a re-evaluation of British political ideologies. This re-evaluation coincided with, and possibly accelerated the relinquishing of several resource drained colonial territories. According to Rex and Tomlinson:-

During this period (of black immigration) there was a slow and painful abandonment of ideals in the face of rising racial tension. Notions which would have been dismissed as morally disgraceful by nearly all parties in the early 1950s became the unspoken ground assumptions of the most respectable politicians and leader writers by the end of the 1960s. [20]

Blacks on their door-steps was certainly a different thing to blacks four thousand miles away. The humanitarianism which Britain so boastfully claims to have been behind the final abolition of slavery, was sadly lacking when the children of the slaves finally came 'home' to 'mother'. Again quoting Rex and Tomlinson, [21] 'The actual contingencies which the (black) settlement created, produced responses which were, perhaps, latent in the structure of British society, but which were at odds with the ideologies of conservative imperialism, liberal individualism, and international socialism'. These ideologies were instrumental in informing the philosophical debates during the shaping of the British Nations.

The politicisation of racism is a phenomenon which certainly existed prior to the fourth decade of the twentieth century

when large scale labour migrations of 'New' Commonwealth citizens to Britain took place. Racism, however, is often insignificantly addressed, partly because of the way in which students of various academic disciplines have tended to name the symptoms rather than the disease itself. Prejudice and xenophobia are usually discussed as though they were 'natural' human reactions, and are usually referred to in isolation from their effects on recipient groups. This abstraction of the debate from the resultant physical effects, tends to dull the impact of the knowledge that immigrants are often subjected to vile abuses and inhumane treatments.

In the same vein, notions of nationalism are often used to explain/excuse behaviour of sections of the receiving group towards an incoming group. Again, nationalism is seen to be some kind of tangible inalienable commodity with advantages accruing to owners of the particular nationality. Nationalism, however, is a many dimensional construct - having implications for 'in' as well as 'out' groups.

Within this psychological construct of 'nationalism', people who occupy a specific geographical area are deemed to have attributes which are different from - and in most cases believed to be superior to other such groups. Within a specific regional boundary there is usually the existence of highly structured inter-related groups (class/caste), each having specific positions which are believed to be the result of a natural evolutionary process or by divine dictate. These positions often determine a group's roles,

relationship to other groups and privileges accorded, including rights to nationality. The status-quo is maintained either through opiotic practices such as feudal patronage/deference relationships, religious admonitions, force, or the 'carrot' of co-option.

Within British geographical boundaries, the move from a feudal, pyramidally structured society where the monarch and ruling elite formed a small peak of privileged ethno-centric (culture-centric) group, to a plateau type, was one achieved through lengthy struggles, as people wrestled to be amongst the deference receiving groups at the top, or simply to obtain a reasonable level of subsistence. Throughout most of Britain's historical development, this struggle has continued with varying degrees of tensions. These internal struggles, it must be stressed, are no less than micro and regional ethnocentric sperrings, based on 'groups' experiential notions of culture. William G. Sumner is purported to have been the first to define ethnocentrism as a:-

view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it ... Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities and looks with contempt on outsiders<sup>[22]</sup>.

The stratified nature of British society and levels of exploitation inherent in capitalism provides the perfect opportunity for nationalism to be intermittently redefined, both with reference to the various groups within the country's geographical boundaries, as well as with external groups.

The prevailing ideologies of nineteenth century Britain defined and created poverty. Thus, poverty, and attempts by the poor to relieve themselves of capitalist exploitation, was defined as a form of cultural degeneration and therefore, potentially disruptive to the status-quo. This credentialised the penal punishment of transportation as a temporary banishment which allowed 'nationals' to retain their 'rights to British soil' from afar, reclaimable when they had regenerated themselves culturally by exhibiting tangible economic result of enterprising activities/labour. Ethnocentrism had maintained, therefore, that for poor British 'nationals', incontrovertible residential rights, were not automatic, despite 'ownership' of citizenship accorded by the ancient rights - *us soli*, (by virtue of being born on British soil).

Internal micro and regional ethnocentrism sets a precedence for reactions to 'out groups', in cases of macro-ethnocentrism and racism. In the former, 'out groups' are compared and graded according to values placed on such things as clothing, language, methods of production<sup>[23]</sup>. Thus, both the Irish and Jews suffered from macro-ethnocentrism on their entry to nineteenth century Britain. They entered the British society as a 'sub-class' and there is undoubtedly notions of cultural superiority underlying their reception. The Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain in 1836 stressed:-

The Irish emigration into Britain is an example of a less civilised population spreading themselves, as a kind of sub-stratum, beneath a more civilised community; and, without excelling in any branch of industry, obtaining possession of all the lowest departments of manual labour.

of the Jews, Arnold White commented in the 1890s:-

*The typical foreign immigrant we wish to exclude is an incapable; he belongs to no trade union; he is the person who makes the lives of the Jewish Board of Guardians a burden; he speaks no English, learns no skilled trade, and is destitute of qualities that enrich civilised communities.* [24]

In other words, these groups had nothing to offer and should be excluded, or at least separated from the receiving groups, to prevent the 'spread' of degeneration. There is no doubt too that the language of racial supremacy featured very strongly in the responses to Jewish and Irish immigrants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; these groups being seen to be at a lower evolutionary stage than themselves. Similar, and stronger sentiments were to be expressed later in post-war years, when Britain's great need for imported labour attracted 'black', ex/colonial labour.

Many of the contemporary comments about the immoral and debasing influence which certain depressed areas were supposed to have on the society at large, were made with specific knowledge that the inhabitants of those areas were Jews and Irish people. Implicit in the condemnations of slums was the belief that immigrants created adverse living conditions, instead of being forced to endure them, as racism had ensured that better alternative accommodation was often denied. Consequentially, instead of accepting that actual rejuvenation of depressed areas was a possible

solution to some of society's ills, anti-immigrant feelings clouded logical reasoning and hence solutions.

Where differing physical features, - especially skin colour and other biologically determined features, are involved in group interaction, the effects of macro-ethnocentrism becomes more virulent, and is usually referred to as racism, the latter often regarded as a continuum of the former. Praisewerk and Perrot quote Albert Memmi's definition of racism as:-

... the valorization, generalized and definitive, of real or imaginary differences, which profits the accuser to the detriment of his victim in order to justify his privileges or his aggression. [25]

There is no doubt that ethnocentrism is an integral part of racism, and as we have seen in relation to the earlier non-black immigrants to Britain, they were often abused through racist language. Nevertheless, the anti-Irish and anti-Jewish reactions were examples of ethnocentrism not racism. Between Europeans and other groups, the latter is usually based on identification of skin colour and facial features.

#### The Role of Scapegoats

From the above, it should not be difficult to understand how immigrants become easy targets for scapegoating. The intensity of adverse reactions depends largely on the perceived inferiority of their culture or biological make-up. Where the latter phenomenon exists - as in the case of black immigrants in Britain, Allport's [26] assertion becomes more pertinent. He stressed that there are innate tendencies

in a section of any society, who will respond to frustrating circumstances with aggression; focussing on available out-groups, rather than on the true source of the aggression. This is particularly characteristic of British working class versus immigrant antagonisms. Allport implies that candidates are chosen for the role of 'scapegoat' - thus becoming targets for discriminatory treatments - because of their position in the society. Ethnic characteristics or stereotyped ideas about them, often existed in the society before the 'minor group' entered it.

Scapegoating has been characteristic of Britain's treatment not only of its indigenous perceived 'culturally deficient' groups, but more amplified in relation to immigrants. It was this, together with outright racism which prompted the first anti-immigrant legislation of 1905. In 1889, the House of Lords had advocated prohibiting foreign immigration and in response, a Select Committee was appointed in 1890 to produce evidence to validate this action. They concluded that although there appeared to be no immediate need for restrictive policies, this would be necessary in the future.

By 1896 Arnold White - social imperialist and advocate of medical sterilisation of the 'unfit' (i.e. the poor who were often casualties of industrialisation), published a letter from the Prime Minister. In this he stated his anxiety to pass an Alien Immigration Bill - which he believed would be 'valuable and much demanded by the working classes' [27]. In 1905 the Aliens Act was passed - thereby restricting the inflow of aliens - This Act it must be stressed, marked the

first capitulation of the British government to racist anti-immigrant clamours.

Reactions against the Irish and Jews, were in some measure similar to those experienced by black immigrants of post war years. However, the more ethnocentrically different immigrants are perceived to be, the greater will be the reactions against them. The Irish and Jews are not so physically identifiable as the black immigrants, consequently in time, they can be absorbed/assimilated or hidden in the society, thereby escaping some of the most overt forms of racism. For black immigrants, however, even if they wanted to, complete assimilation is not possible - except for generations of mixed-breeding. In the 'civilised' world of 1960s Britain, the Law would deal with this 'problem'.

Since the 1950s, political debates and enactment of laws, have resulted in Britain, being an institutionally and politically racist country, and an anathema to Black people.

Racism was able to do what no other force in the country could do - that is uniting all white classes in the society. This, therefore, served to expose the fallacy and simplistic explanation of certain left-wing interpretations that the race question is merely an extension of the class 'problem', and not germane to an understanding of black people's positions in white societies. Call it lack of sophistication, cynicism realism or whatever, it is my perception that the majority of black people in this country do not believe that the adverse treatments meted out to them by 'white' people, has much to do with simply their economic



role or class position in this or other white societies generally. In a strange way also, such explanations are at

best naive and at worst racist in that they have assumed the right to designate class positions or fail to acknowledge that amongst black immigrants there are also members of the middle and upper classes, with achievements and aspirations similar to indigenous classes in this country. Although they too suffer racial abuses, their class self-affiliation will render them contradictory to working class ideals

The above has traced the development of ethnocentrism both at the micro and macro level. The intensity of the adverse reaction seemed to have culminated in overt racism with the advent of immigration of so-called 'New Commonwealth' immigration. This gives credence to the thesis that the more 'alien' a group is perceived to be, the more likely they are to be stereotyped and the greater the measures to exclude them. The following quote aptly captivates British hegemonic reactions in the presence of a perceived 'undesirable' out-group. By the mid-1970s, Rex and Tomlinson stressed:-

whatever the humane traditions of conservatism, the concern for human rights of liberalism, or the internationalism of the unions and labour, there was effective agreement amongst the majority of each of those parties that coloured immigration must be limited and that any special effort to help coloured immigrants to overcome discrimination was electorally unprofitable. At best, immigrants were to be tolerated, but, on the whole, the consensus was that this was a dangerous element outside normal politics and outside the normal class system. The immigrants were frequently treated as scapegoats for the economic ills which beset the community, and, if they occasionally engaged in outbursts of violence or joined in the often ill-considered attempts of the extreme left to defend them against the National Front, they were blamed as much as anyone for the breakdown of law and order. (28)

Despite the above anti-immigrant strategies adopted by Britain, but in line with the requisites of capitalist progression, that is, further industrial development, Britain still needed immigrants. A quandary, that she has continued to face, is how to obtain the maximum returns for labour with a relatively low capital investment. Post War immigration to Britain was intended to relieve labour shortage and in many cases was a substitution for capital investment - whether in the form of technological innovation or the releasing of funds for increasing wages to attract domestic labour from surplus areas. It is the realisation of this latter point which has resulted in trade unions, in both the UK and US, often being in the vanguard of anti-immigrant abuses. There were, indeed, available surplus labour in Britain during the period of Commonwealth Immigration - particularly in the industrially depressed regions of the North. Despite the fact that immigrants are initially much more mobile than domestic labour, it is possible that, with the right incentives (in the absence of legislative coercion), redundant internal labour would have been enticed to move to labour starved areas. There are, however, other factors to be considered, one of these being that if, in the short run immigration is believed to operate at a relatively low labour/capital ratio, then in a period of capital formation, employers might consider it more economical to use imported, as opposed to indigenous labour.

There are adverse implications following from this alternative, however - including allocating a part of the national income into social capital investment to meet the

immigrants' needs. Although in the long run, at least, immigration is believed to have an inflationary effect on the economy, these are considerations for national planners and legislators, not so much for the individual industrialist/manufacturer who is aiming to maximise profit at the lowest output costs. Thus, short-term returns as opposed to long term effects are often the main objectives.

The recent phenomenon of capital export to Far Eastern labour markets is another attempt to retain a low labour/capital ratio. At the same time, however, industrialists are able to exploit cheap labour and raw material sources, without the controlling hand of Trade Unionism. Another important spin-off effect of this type of capital export is exploitation at a distance prevents a recurrent of the racial antagonisms such as existed during the Commonwealth immigration of the 1940s through to the 1960s.

There is still migrant labour entering Britain to fill vacancies - mainly in the service industries where either because of low economies of scale or an inability to replace the necessary 'human touch', technological innovation is not considered a viable alternative. These movements are infinitesimal, when compared to previous waves of migration, and are strongly controlled by contract recruitment. This ensures that workers will leave the country at the end of their contract.

While immigration from the Commonwealth Caribbean regions has now virtually ceased, there are still thousands of

'legitimate' dependents of Asian immigrants waiting to join their relations in this country. The paranoia created from the 1950s onwards, led to stringent immigration laws intending to keep out black people and to retain the 'whiteness' of the Anglo-Saxon stock. These laws have placed the onus on dependents to prove they have legitimate rights to join their loved ones. This has led to abuses of the basest kind and a contravention of immigrants basic rights.

Traditionally, the severity of inevitable social changes which takes place with each new wave of immigrants, is often cushioned by the fact that within a relatively short period of time new-comers were assimilated (though often only partially), into the wider society. This was usually achieved by 'admonishment', sometimes brutal wresting, from the wider society, pragmatism by the newcomers, or a slow, unconscious abandonment as cross-socialisation takes place.

The Jews in 1890s US were told to: 'Hold fast, this is most necessary in America. Forget your past, your customs, and your ideals ... do not take a moment's rest. Run, do, work, and keep your own good in mind.'<sup>[28]</sup> Gutzman further stressed that 'distorted perceptions and fears of new American workers', led to the newcomers being urged to 'assimilate' quickly or face a quiet but sure extermination'. Those who retained their alien ways, 'will share the fate of the native Indian.'<sup>[30]</sup>

As has been mentioned, previously, Black immigrants cannot assimilate - to the extent that they are easily identifiable - even if this were their desire. Thus, the most attainable and contemporarily acceptable outcome is mutual co-existence. And yet, the general apathy, overt rejection, and tendency of the native British groups to view Black people as 'barbaric and pathological', together with the use of the legislature to ensure that Black people remain 'un-British', militates against this. There appears,

nevertheless, to be a strange process taking place, whereby Black people are denied 'real British' identification, yet prevented from self-identification. Thus on 24.02.89, Conservative MP, Terry Dicks wrote in the Tatler magazine:

I don't believe in the phrase Afro-Caribbean. They are West Indians and that's where they came from. If they want to go back to Africa then we can give them some ladders and they can climb up the trees if they want to.[31]

From a position of relatively open-door policy and an invitation to former colonial citizens to enter the country, Britain has moved full circle and is now virtually closed to non-patrials (non-Anglo Saxon stock). Black immigration had exposed Britain to the microscopic scrutiny of liberalism/socialism - and she was found sadly lacking. Almost involuntarily, the hypocritical cloak of racial tolerance which had been worn for so long, now fell off. It was, no doubt received with ironic satisfaction by countries like South Africa and the U.S. who had so often been remonstrated by Britain because of their overt racism against the black members of their societies. 'King George Niggers' who had escaped the worst of U.S. racism during farm work or as War manpower - simply because they claimed protection under the British Crown, came 'Home' and found that protection was no longer there, once on British soil. In fact, they were eventually to find that the legislature was used to curtail their entry.

In commenting on Britains anti-black legislation, Fryer had this to say:-

It's the first step that counts. The 1962 Act was a piece of discriminatory legislation whose 'obvious intention' was to reduce the total annual inflow of black people into Britain. Its 'unstated and unrecognised assumption' was that black people were the source of the problem. From this assumption everything else flowed and would flow - including, as Stuart Hall has pointed out with justified acerbity, all those liberal television programmes on the 'problems' of 'race relations' every word and image in which are 'impregnated with unconscious racism' since they are 'precisely predicated on racist premises' [36].

Having just emerged from six years of War - purported to be against racist Nazi protagonists, one is confronted with the fact that Britain - the acclaimed anti-Nazi victor found it possible to engage in racist, anti-Black rhetoric and policy implementation - akin to those for which the Nazi foes had - allegedly been vanquished!

To obtain a clearer understanding of this apparent contradiction, it is well to turn to one of Britain's widely acclaimed historian, Arnold J. Toynbee who wrote:-

... in bringing in a well-deserved verdict of 'guilty' against German prisoners at the bar of Divine Justice, the rest of the Western World was proclaiming its own guilt in the same breath; for, when a non-German majority of a Western community had done its best to clear itself of complicity in German crimes by making the most of the German people's peculiar aberrations from the main path of the Western Civilization's moral and political progress in the Modern Age, these non-German Westerners could not deny, in the last resort, that those horrifyingly aberrant Germans were still bone of their bones and flesh of their flesh.

A Western nation which, for good or evil, had played so central a part in Western history .... could hardly have committed these flagrant crimes if the same criminality had not been festering foully below the surface of life in the Western World's non-German provinces. [37]

The potential then, for the vilest abuses and inhumane behaviour laid - and continue to lie - in the very fabric of

Western societies. The above observation is of more contemporary relevance, when one considers the international trend to politicise and institutionalise racism rather than seriously catharise themselves. This phenomenon led the European Parliament to publish its Declaration against racism and racism in 1987<sup>[32]</sup>

### Conclusion

In order to understand the processes involved in the transition from migrant labourer to immigrant and eventually to national/citizen, it is necessary to focus attention on the inter-active processes between both the receiving and incoming group.

My analysis provides grounds for concentrating on an ethnography of Jamaicans - possibly the most maligned group of labour migrants to Britain. Such studies are crucial in understanding their experiences, and physical as well as psychological constructs for survival amidst ethnocentric and racist bombardment in the UK.

Perhaps most important is the opportunity these studies offer for analysing the socio/political/economic metamorphosis which has been effected in Britain by this particular historical process. Evidence points to the fact that this process tended to coincide with, and possibly was reinforced, as a consequence of inherent biases such as classism, xenophobia and racism.

The following chapters, through backward and forward historical integration should enable a lucid understanding of some of the tensions and responses which occurred with the relatively large-scale injection of Black people as 'unwelcome' but needed labour into the UK economy.

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CHAPTER 2A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF  
JAMAICA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTIntroduction

In this chapter, a basic description of economic and social features in Jamaica is given in an attempt to locate environmental conditions which contribute to out migration from the Island.

The tendency of early commentators to emphasise economic and social degradation of sending countries without contextualising it historically, or giving due credence to the struggles for autonomy and economic development, especially by ex-colonial governments has made labour migrants vulnerable to racist comments and can lead to a fragmentation of working class solidarity.

Broad generalisations of the macro situation often hide the fact that the majority of people who came from the Caribbean were not the most destitute in their societies. Indeed, for a large number of them, migration to the UK led to a down-grading in the type of work they did and even lower monetary remuneration.

The majority of labour migrants from the Caribbean were amongst some of the most skilled and economically successful of peasant and artisan groups, yet they have been contemporarily portrayed as large numbers of destitute people coming to take jobs and food out of locals' mouths. This undoubtedly contributed to the adverse reception and

interaction towards these than - such required source of labour.

#### JAMAICA : GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLAND

In commenting on colonial economic policies Lin Henry wrote of the Anglo-Caribbean regions:-

Unemployment and under-employment in large dimensions, low productivity and extremely low wages, obsolete technology, managerial inefficiency, and a vast army of unskilled and semi-literate labour force were some of the dominant features of the region's economic inheritance after some 300 years of colonialism. Apart from economic destitution and social disorganisation of the society, native manpower resources were left stunted and under-developed; for managerial, executive and administrative functions were almost entirely the sole prerogative colonial expatriates. [1]

Likewise, in his comments on the economic development of Jamaica, Owen Jefferson [2] believes that until the 1940's, growth in secondary industries was scarce in Jamaica and this was thought to be due Crown Colony policy. In the 19th century, the British Government was reluctant to allow expansion of urban areas in the Island as this was thought to lead eventually to a growth in secondary or manufacturing industries which would detract from Britain's ability to exploit the Island as an export market for manufactured goods. Jefferson wrote:-

The active promotion of secondary industry was never a feature of official policy during the period of Crown Colony Government ... the export of agricultural products and the importation of almost all the Island's requirements of manufactured goods remained basically unchanged in the period prior to the nineteen forties. [3]

This of course, does not imply a total absence of secondary industries or an entrepreneurial group in post-emancipation Jamaica. What it does suggest, is that in the main, these are not grown out of 'local creole stock', through traditional development of 'risk-takers'. In Jamaica, as in most societies, there has always existed a pool of indigenous 'proto-entrepreneurs', usually made up of artisans, traders and merchants. Amongst these are many who, if left unhindered by external and internal factors, would make the transition from basic petty enterprises (penny capitalists), to become the industrialists and manufacturers within the country. However, many of these local 'would-be entrepreneurs' were either stifled out of existence or have been forced to remain in an embryonic stage in Jamaica, through the early presence of oligopolistic groups who, though their presence dates back to the 1830's were relative new-comers.

Colonial 'discouragement' is only part of the story, as far as Jamaican industrial under-development goes. Undoubtedly, some of the answers can be found in Ferrer's [4] observations that:-

... aside from the restrictions which the authorities imposed on colonial activities competing with those of the metropolis, the structure of the export sector, as well as the concentration of wealth, were the basic obstacles to the diversification of the internal productive structure and, therefore, to the consequent elevation of the technical and cultural levels of the population, the development of social groups connected with the evolution of the internal market, and the search for new lines of exportation free from the metropolitan authority.

The seeds of economic dynamism in Jamaica - as in most other colonies - were to be found in its export sector. However, A high dependence on sugar and other agricultural staples placed the Island in a vulnerable position. As well as being subject to climatic conditions and disease, the problem is further compounded when demand for staples is

elastic, and therefore readily open to competition and substitution. Jamaica's sugar industry began to decline rapidly when it faced competition from other slave-producing countries as well as sugar-beet production.

#### Agriculture, Land Holdings and Labour Utilization

In the early stages of economic development, many countries have relied on agro-capital to generate 'take-off' into sustained economic and industrial growth.

Jamaica's economy is predominantly agricultural, although there has been a relative decline since 1950 in this sector's contribution to G.N.P. In 1950, the agricultural sector accounted for approximately 70% of the output of secondary industries. In 1968 agriculture contributed 10.2% of G.D.P., as against 40% G.D.P., in 1930. Despite this, the 1960 Census revealed that agriculture was still responsible for approximately 39% of the employed labour force. In 1950 to 1968, population and real per capita income rose at a rate of 1.8% and 4.1% per annum respectively. A growth in demand for food supplies during the period increased by 4.0% per annum while domestic food supply only grew at a rate of 2.1% per annum - hence the need for a greater reliance on food importation which pushes up the cost of living index.

In Jamaica, 50% and over of working class household's income is spent on food. As the price of food rises, due to scarcity, this has continually created severe pressures on wages - particularly to people who are not in a position to gain from Union bargaining. People find that larger proportions of their wages are taken up by food purchases which, of necessity will become poorer and poorer in quality as they attempt to cover their other expenses.

In 1930 it was estimated that approximately 184,000 peasants cultivated less than 50 acres of land. The 1943 Census

showed that 70% of Jamaican farms were under five acres in size and 43,000 were less than one acre. Further 97% of farms occupied only 39% of the land and the larger estates still continued to monopolise the most fertile areas. Despite this, 'export production assumed increasing importance in peasant production until it reached 29% ... and ... by then 41 per cent of all exports originated from the peasant's production'[3]. In addition to crop production, many peasants have traditionally been able to supplement their incomes by chopping wood from their land to build houses and make furniture, as well as shingles for roofs.

Jefferson, in studying the post war economic development of Jamaica, found that there was an extensive reduction in the number of farms and farm acreage between 1954 and 1968. He found that the number of farms declined from 1,788,660 acres to 1,507,397, representing a loss of about 281,000 acres of agricultural land. Some of this land includes the amount sold to the bauxite companies, some to building contractors, while a sizeable proportion is held back for speculative purposes, as the decline in farm lands inevitably result in an increase in the price per acre. The government has also been responsible for purchasing some larger holdings, for land settlement purposes.

A decrease in the agricultural sector has been followed by a decline in the number of people who live on farms, or are dependent on their earnings from agriculture in order to make a living. Between 1954 and 1961, the farm population fell from 900,000 to 740,000, a total decrease of 18%. Rural de-population has continued to take place at an alarming rate and Jefferson believes that urban rural living standards disparity is undoubtedly a factor in explaining the decline in the agricultural population as a whole. Uneven land distribution has been blamed for the disparity

between rural and urban incomes. In 1962, less than 25% of total agricultural income was earned by 83% of the farmers.

In the report of the Agricultural Policy Committee in 1945, the stated basic objective was "The achievement and maintenance of a reasonable standard of living for all the people with the possibility of providing for a progressive increase in that standard." [6] In their attempt to improve the agricultural sector, and in particular living standard of the small farmer, the government launched several schemes such as the Farm Development Scheme 1955 to 1960, the Agricultural Development Programme 1960-65 and the Farmers Production Programme 1963-68.

Under these schemes, approximately J\$15.7 millions were paid out in subsidies and loans, but these sums appear to have made little impact on the state of farms, or the expanding disequilibrium in social and economic areas of life between urban and rural areas. Further, despite improving schemes, output of farms below 25 acres actually fell during the 1955-60 period. Jefferson believes that the failures of development schemes to achieve meaningful improvements, is an indication that small farmers perceived their problems as stemming from other reasons. For example, the land tenure system leaves tenants in a precarious position - uncertain about renewal of rental. Lack of rental permanency is no doubt, a deterrent to capital and labour intensive schemes.

A large proportion of peasant holdings are legacies 'family land'. Although this has meant that family members are able, if they so wish, to cultivate their own crops, the practice has many negative aspects. Firstly, it leads to over-cultivation as the plots are often too small - relative to the demands made on them. Secondly, collateral raising is impeded as often ownership of Will or Title cannot be proven. Consequently, even if plots of land are big enough and has development potential, they are often unable to

raise investment loans. Thirdly, Edith Clarke points out that "there is abundant evidence that ... where group inheritance is the rule ... disputes most often occur due to the exclusion of one or other line of descent." [7] In addition, there are usually arguments about who pays the taxes and it is usually impossible to obtain full co-operation regarding proposed sale, rental and development. Consequently, such 'family' lands become abandoned if people migrate either to the towns or out of the country.

The 1955 Facilities for Titles Law aimed to increase farmers security and enable them to raise loans - using their lands for security. As long as the farmer was able to establish proof of ownership other than Titles, they would be granted such. Due partly to this facility, the Agricultural Census of 1961-62 highlighted an increase in farms owned by the operators from 56.8% to 76.0% for the 1954-61 period. However, as Jefferson points out, comparatively few people took up loans, possibly because they were reluctant to surrender their Titles as securities, fearing inability to repay loans.

Secondly, the extent to which peasants/small farmers desire to produce above subsistence level, is doubtful. The majority, it appears, require only a small surplus to enable them to have some liquid cash at hand. Incentives to increase productivity must outweigh relative satisfaction. For example, what is the use of encouraging people to increase food production when due to inadequate marketing facilities, they often watch a large portion of their crops rot before their eyes?

Stone pointed out that:-



The Jamaican small farmer does not, like the urban social strata, relate primarily to material rewards, although they are obviously quite important to him. The dignity and sense of independence that comes from working a piece of land that he controls regardless of whether he actually owns it is a such cherished value that no agricultural planning can ignore without grave risks of failure.

He went on to say that:-

Because his style and rhythm of life are tied to the social and psychic values derived from working the land, he is able to survive the vagaries of price inflation and commodity shortage better than any other class in the society provided he has access to land and working capital. It is for these reasons that he constitutes the greatest source of social and political stability in the society<sup>(8)</sup>.

Abdul Babu, in stressing the importance of agriculture to most Third World Countries, criticised 'apologists of the status quo' who favour transferring labour from subsistence farming where people are believed to be under-producing, and releasing them into the secondary or tertiary sectors, to expand supply and demand. He stressed that:-

According to this essentially bourgeois commercial approach, any new product which has an 'effective demand' in the market is a gain to the economy and causes the G.N.P. to grow correspondingly, no matter what impact, negative or positive, the production of such goods or services has on the society as a whole.

This approach makes no distinction between productive and unproductive labour, so that a domestic servant is considered to be 'gainfully' employed if he is working twelve hours a day looking after the house of an auctioneer, rather than producing his own food on the land or fetching water for his uncle, who would thereby be free to concentrate on productive work or take a little extra leisure time<sup>(9)</sup>.

Transference of socially necessary agro-labour to service sectors rarely yields economic surplus, leading to a growth in domestic industries.

By breaking down the peasantry and forcing workers to travel in order to sell their labour, a 'reserve labour army' is created. Those who flood into urban centres, exists as alternative labour pools and a constant threat to employed labour. Further, this process allows Metropolitan countries to exploit satellites. Thus the periphery, after bearing all the costs involved in rearing a child from birth up to an economically productive age, finds that instead of reaping the benefits of this 'investment', has to work harder to complete all the tasks previously undertaken by emigrants, while finding that in a climate of declining international demand for agricultural commodities farmers are forced to endure diminishing returns.

It is no wonder that those remaining, soon, themselves join the outward trek in search of a perceived better life. Though for some, this forced migration was unwelcome, as evidenced by the following bitter response from Mr. Thomas, the 68 year old widower in Birmingham. I asked him:-

Ques: Have you been back to Jamaica at all?

Ans: No Sista, I doan want to go back dere ... No, I doan want to go back dere.

Ques: Why do you say that?

Ans: No ... I doan want to know dat place ... ovva mi dead body! ... Why I say dat? Ah go tell yu why I say dat. I shouldn' leave Jamaica and come a dis coile place come look work. Money is dere, but what's happen ... If yu into a country and deh cannot store work fi let di people dem get it ... yu starve! Yu got to strain! An from I born, I shouldn't come ovva here come look fi save penny!

Ques: So you were angry that you had to come to England?

Ans: Yeah ... I decide ... if I win di Pool ... I still wouldn't go back a Jamaica ... Naw ... naw ... I go to a nex country ... Jamaica dem is advantage tekka ... Yu understan? ... Yu shouldn't have to travel ovva di worl' fi look a cent

### Industrial Development

In 1952 the Jamaican Industrial Development Corporation was founded and by 1962 it had established 121 industrial plants. The majority of these industries were located in urban areas and this has continued to act as a magnet for large numbers of unemployed people who trek from rural areas in search of the non-existent vacancies. It was many of these rural-urban migrants who eventually formed the bulk of external migrants to the UK, USA and Canada.

In commenting on the spectacular economic growth in 1950 to 1962, Ambursely indicated that:- "Foreign trade increased eight-fold, nominal G.N.P. grew sevenfold and per capita national income also grew by 700 per cent. In real terms G.D.P. growth averaged 5-6 per cent per annum overall, and 3-4 per cent per capita<sup>[11]</sup>." Between 1963-65 an oil refinery plant was constructed as well as a fertiliser plant in 1966 and a plant to produce synthetic materials such as wall board from bagasse. Plans were made at this time too, to invest J\$63,000 in the fishing industry and in June 1964, J\$5,000,000 was contributed for the remodelling of Kingston Wharf. Sugar exports, with its by-products, increased from J\$7+ millions in 1950 to J\$32.9 millions in 1969. The production of beer, carbonated beverages, cows milk, tobacco and by-products of coconut such as edible oil, fats, copra and soap increased markedly in 1961. By 1968, however the growth rate had lost momentum. Jefferson commented that none of the major economic sectors in Jamaica had a higher rate of growth during the 1960-68 period than for the 1955-60 period. A slowing-down in the island's exports to traditional trading areas of Canada, U.S.A., and the U.K., is held responsible. The latter's involvement in the European Economic Community, undoubtedly influenced the decline in demand for ex-colonial staples.

1969 was the first year of operation for the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) and Jamaica's total trade with the Association amounted to \$4.8 millions in 1968 rising to \$7.2 millions in 1969, while at the same time, imports increased from \$3.1 millions to \$4.9 millions between 1968-9. The value of total merchandise trade (imports + domestic exports + re-exports) in 1969 showed an increase of 15.8%, (\$562.8 millions, as opposed to \$503.4 millions in 1968). Most of this trade went to the Dollar areas, mainly other Caribbean territories, Canada and the U.S.A., while the proportion of total trade with the Sterling Area, the European Common Market and other countries decreased [12].

Since late 1960, the increasing participation of Jamaicans in industrial undertakings were becoming evident. In 1970, 24% of industries were owned by Jamaicans, as against 10% in 1962. It was also estimated that approximately 40% of all industrial firms were owned by Jamaicans and foreigners on an equal partnership basis. ('Jamaicans' here very rarely included those of African descent). What is significant about the industrial development of the 1950's and 60's is the extent to which they were dependent on external capital to finance them. As Amburesely stressed:-

(The) impressive economic performance was based upon a massive inflow of foreign capital and a prodigious growth in imports for the island's productive system. Between 1963 and 1972 foreign investment financed 32 per cent of total investment. Imports of raw materials, fuels and intermediate capital goods grew far more quickly than total imports, and during the same period, increased their share in the total of imports from 26 per cent to 36 per cent. Thus local productive activity became increasingly dependent on a regular and uninterrupted supply of imports, at the same time as imports became increasingly dependent on external financing [13].

Use of foreign capital to finance domestic economic development was not new to Jamaica. By 1962, with the attainment of Independence, more strident steps were taken

to pursue this goal, with the adoption of the so-called Puerto Rican Model of development. This model encapsulates gross exploitation along with perceived capital gains. Developing economies woo or succumb to approaches by advanced industrial economies to set up secondary manufacturing sectors in their country. Through the concept of import substitution or secondary stage production, countries are attracted by the possibility of a kick start to their own domestic industries, which the introduction of more advanced technology, initially financed from outside capital, is perceived to bring. Large industrial companies are attracted by the availability of cheap labour reserves, and a high level of economic destitution which renders third world countries virtually impotent to resist capital demands. Often the importing country is forced to agree to demands from the foreign country with the result that any relief gained from such a partnership is short-lived. For example, the investing firm may demand conditions of payment which detracts - in the initial phase from the country's abilities to invest some of its profits into developing indigenous growth sectors.

The 'real problem' for the majority of third world countries has to do with a high rate of unemployment, lack of investment capital and often a regrettable absence of natural resources or those requiring such enormous sums of money to exploit them, that such attempts are futile even before starting. This is compounded by their vulnerability to international capitalist exploitation.

Guérin wrote that 'Industrialisation in itself is no panacea to what ails the islands' of the Caribbean. It cannot solve the problem of poverty' when the profits it creates are lapped up by a new plutocracy and drained away by what we need not hesitate to call a new form of imperialism' [14].

Also, as commented by Arthur Lewis, 'industrialisation in a large number of developing countries has no chance of succeeding without foreign aid Lewis wrote that:-

The process of development carries its own paradox. The expansion of the modern sector of the economy creates new jobs and raises sharply the income of all who live by that sector. But there is no guarantee that it will not destroy more jobs than it creates, through its impact on the traditional sector. Rapid economic expansion and rapidly growing unemployment can easily co-exist if the social system is based on excessive mechanisation and gets too far out of line with what the rest of the economy can bear<sup>[15]</sup>.

While many industrially advanced countries are accepting that 'small is efficient' and are encouraging a return to small manufacturing, the majority of developing countries are still mortgaging themselves to foreign capitalists as they emulate the actions of industrial magnates of over two hundred years ago. Harrison referred to a World Bank survey of four countries, where it was found that 'small firms produced between 80 to 300 per cent more output per unit of fixed capital than large firms ... Smallness, in other words, can accelerate economic growth and ensure that the benefits of growth are equitably shared.' (Harrison - P.158)<sup>[16]</sup>.

#### Bauxite and Alumina

Since 1951, the bauxite and alumina industries have become the greatest contributors to G.D.P. in Jamaica. In 1969, mining, quarrying and refining contributed \$95.9 millions to G.D.P. at factor cost, compared to \$72.4 millions in 1968 - an increase of 32.5% for the sector as a whole. Bauxite and alumina contributed 34.5% while for the same year, quarrying and petroleum refining showed a growth of 15.4%, accounting for 33.1% of the increase in G.D.P. for the economy as a whole<sup>[17]</sup>.

A high mechanisation pre-requisite in the bauxite industry, dictates that only a small number of local workers could be employed. The majority of skilled personnel was grafted from abroad in the early stages. As a result, a small, but highly paid elite group of workers emerged and, as suggested by Mitchell, 'The employment of a small elite, at unrealistic wages exerts an unsettling effect on workers in less favoured occupations' [18].

The large capital requirement at the initial stage of bauxite mining, together with the high degree of skills needed, has meant that the local elites have not been able to exploit this area. Consequently, the bauxite companies, were not perceived as direct competitors by local monied classes, except through the acquisition of land which undoubtedly presented a conflict of interests. Nevertheless, because of the attractive prices which the bauxite companies offered for the land, many of these were willing to capitulate in favour of monetary settlement.

Girvan emphasises the fact that 'Bauxite valued at \$50 .. yields aluminum products that can be sold for anything up to \$2,000.' Traditionally, most of the profits made from bauxite and alumina are repatriated to shareholders of the companies in America and Canada, instead of being re-invested in donor countries. The lack of interest in the donor economies is emphasised by these companies in their erection of processing plants for bauxite and alumina in other regions. Girvan emphasised, that 'The Caribbean countries, in spite of their possession of some of the world's largest bauxite deposits, have been confined to the simple low-value activities, and particularly to the extraction of the bauxite ore and to that alone' [19].

Propensity for labour absorption in the processing industries is best emphasized by a quote by Richard Reynolds, President of Reynolds Metals:-

... it can be demonstrated that almost 20,000 jobs at Reynolds in the United States - two-thirds of our total - work with bauxite, alumina or aluminum derived from Jamaica. Since the U.S. aluminum industry as a whole employs ... some 300,000 people - and since half of the domestic industry's bauxite comes from Jamaica - we are talking about 150,000 jobs in this country that trace back to raw materials from Jamaica[20].

By generating 150,000 jobs from the raw bauxite from Jamaica, this would have gone a long way in assisting the Island to cope with the large unemployment rate, which has been endemic for well over a century. The insensitivity and possible contempt for the problems of bauxite producing countries, is emphasized further in the extract from a Will of Arthur Vining Davis, who at the time of his death in 1962, had amassed a fortune of \$400 millions, raised almost entirely from his involvement in the Caribbean bauxite industry. "Davis willed most of the money to a foundation, on one condition : its funds could not be used for the benefit of citizens of the Caribbean bauxite-producing countries or any country other than the United States and its possessions"[21]

In 1974 the Manley government increased bauxite tax revenue from \$25 millions to \$200 millions in one year. At the same time, they announced a policy of acquiring a 51% share in the mining operations of the bauxite companies. Cohen and Amburely pointed out that the levy imposition gained the support of local bourgeoisie, whose economic position had been weakened, and who had come to rely increasingly on the state for investment capital. However, retaliation by the bauxite companies to the Levy had far reaching adverse effects, when it did come. They appealed to the 'World Bank's International Centre for the Settlement of Investment



Disputes contesting the legality of the levy.' At the same time, they began withdrawing their interests from Jamaica, and re-emerging in other countries where trading conditions were more conducive to their exploitative nature. 'While American aluminum companies doubled their bauxite imports from Guinea in 1975, they reduced their Jamaican imports by 30%, for a net industry-wide decrease in U.S. bauxite imports of 20%. Jamaica's shares of bauxite in the world market fell from 27% in 1970 to 17% in 1975, while the share of Australia increased from 14% in the same period to 24%, and Guinea, likewise, during the same period, increased its share of bauxite on the world market from 2% to 23%. [22]

Foreign capital inflow to Jamaica shrank from US\$254 millions in 1973 to US\$115 millions in 1975, and in 1976 a net outflow was recorded. Most of the benefits which accrued to the country through the imposition of the levy, soon evaporated with the onslaught of vengeance from the foreign multi-nationals. In an attempt to stem this onslaught, Manley conceded a 0.5% reduction in the 7.5% level rate. In addition, the government linked tax decreases to increases in production. However, the process of withdrawal - once begun, appeared to gather momentum, despite the electoral victory of the J.L.P. under the leadership of Edward Seaga, who was purported to be more sympathetic to such foreign involvement than the Socialist P.N.P.

### Tourism

Next to the bauxite industry, the tourist industry has been, intermittently, the largest source of foreign currency for Jamaica. It superseded the former industry in importance, as far as its ability to utilise labour is concerned. The development of the tourist industry, directly and indirectly provides more employment opportunities than any other development, since the last world war.

Jamaica appears to attract tourists specifically from North America and more particularly from the U.S.A. for example, in 1978 the U.S. accounted for 66% of tourists to the Island, while Canada and Europe accounted for 27%. Although recently, inroads have been made into the European markets and visitors are increasingly coming from Germany, Italy as well as other Continental countries, these are still relatively small in numbers, compared to the U.S. market.

A high market concentration places the industry in a very vulnerable position, and makes it extremely sensitive to movements in the trade cycle in any of the economies of the sending countries. According to Ramesh Ramasaran, 'Tourism itself is a volatile activity that can react to bad publicity related to domestic, social or political conditions, as happened to Jamaica in the late 1970's[23]. To emphasise this point further, Ambursly wrote: "The U.S. press contributed to the de-stabilisation effort by discouraging people from visiting the Island, thereby undercutting the tourist industry. The actual number of visitors from the U.S., a figure that had been rising steadily since the 1960's, declined by 13% between 1974 and 1975, and dropped by more than 10 per cent in 1976"[24].

It could be argued that in the long-run, tourism contributes to the under-development of a country by drawing people away from the land into areas of tourism. This often results in the creation of a lumpen proletariat, existing on the periphery of the tourist centres. Consequently, the adverse effects of over-crowding and a high concentration of the unemployed population, are multiplied several folds. Although Marxist analysis disregards the ability of this group to present a threat to the status quo, through revolutionary activities. Nevertheless, they present real threats to the moral and social as well as the physical fibre of the society. In the many ghettos which surround

urban and tourist areas, crime breeds incessantly. Over-crowding and lack of necessary hygienic facilities, present a real threat to the health of the nation.

In acting as a magnet to redundant labour, tourist resorts can be said to possess a self-destructing element. If the sensitivities of tourists are greatly offended, they will be reluctant to return or to encourage others to do so, thus effecting a decline in the industry and others connected to it. Lastly investment into an industry, which by nature cannot be stable, means that scarce resources are diverted from other growth sectors which are more permanent and would possibly be more effective in the long run in alleviating unemployment problems.

#### Class Formation and Under-Development in Jamaica

In Jamaica, the work of Stanley Reid has served to highlight some of the inadequacies of dependency theories in explaining the Island's economic backwardness. By concentrating on the Metropole/Satellite contacts, dependency theories fail to examine the role of local bourgeoisie in consolidating its privileged position, contributing to class cleavages and inequalities and most important of all, in presenting themselves as vehicles through which the Metropole can more effectively exploit its position.

Reid located the presence of twenty-one families in contemporary Jamaica amongst whom most of the country's wealth and accompanying power is concentrated. Contrary to the observations of economic historians that there is often a conflict of interests between the traditional landed groups and the emergent industrial class, this was certainly not the case in Jamaica. There was a 'marriage' of interests rather than conflict and this provided a 'supportive framework for development of a corporate

economy', which is today, dominated by members of the 'twenty-one families' [25].

Through the economic institution of the corporate firm, the members of the ruling elite were able to concentrate their power and ownership. They were permitted to gain control of public subscriptions - raised through the Jamaican Stock Exchange - while at the same time, through directorships, they could effectively block public involvement and participation in decision making. Thus, as Reid stressed, 'when there are family ties between the principal actors in the corporation's activity then the potential for exerting and exercising concerted power is then enormous' [26].

The twenty-one families dominate in the Construction Industries, Manufacturing Sector, Banking, Distributive Trade, Communications, Agriculture, and through comprador affiliations, they often represent foreign interests in the mining sector. In 1972, these families accounted for 125 of the 219 directorships of firms and approximately 70% of chair-persons roles in the corporate firms. Further, efforts to retain power and control of economic interests has led them to become heavily represented in legal and financial institutions as well as directly involved in politics.

In the area of political analyses, it is a well known axiom that in most countries economic and political power do not exist separately for any long period of time. In the end, either economic power buys out political power or uses its might to break down political control. Stone believes the Jamaican bourgeoisie has been 'unable to change the overall direction of policy change.' However, because they have unhindered access to the media - especially the main daily newspaper the Gleaner which is owned by the Ashenhams - one of the richest and oldest established Jewish groups in the Island. However, the bourgeoisie often resort to

'propaganda campaigns, press statements, and public appeal.' But, as Stone points out, 'their ability to influence public opinion below the level of the upper middle class is extremely weak because the mass public is more often than not sceptical of advocating what appear to be privileged minority interests, and suspicious of what are viewed as selfish and self-seeking motives, not too concerned about the fate of the common man.[27] The perceived weakness in influencing mass support and the outcome of government policies from the outside, has led members of the elite group to become more directly involved in the decision making groups of both leading parties. To refer further to Stone:-

The most powerful channel of bourgeois influence over public policy is the penetration of the state bureaucracy by prominent capitalist who serve as government functionaries in important agencies. The appointments are confined to individuals who enjoy close relations and ties to the governing party leader or to individuals who bring scarce expertise and organisational ability to these tasks. The most self-evident example of this is direction of important government agencies by members of the Metelon family, the largest and most powerful of the local bourgeois family interests.[28]

#### Dependent Independence

So, naturalists, observe a flea With smaller fleas that on him prey; And these have smaller fleas to bite 'em, And so proceed ad infinitum.

Jonathan Swift[29]

By the end of World War II the advantages of self-determinism was an urgent quest for most colonies. The then British West Indies saw their Independence as viable through a regional Federation. Few of them could envisage economic and political viability on their own. The Federation, however, was short lived, due to geographical distances, selfish nationalist ideals and varying advances

in wealth accumulation between the countries, made commitment to a regional independence almost impossible, thus individualistic aims gained pre-eminence..

In Jamaica, as is the case with most so called Developing Countries [particularly those with 'ex-colonial status', equity did not come with Independence and has continued to elude them - despite their many efforts to achieve self-advancement. Development theorists like Frank and Amin believe that once a country has been integrated into the world capitalist system as a satellite, it is 'condemned to under-development'. Gunder Frank wrote that:-

... once a country or a people is converted into the satellite of an external capitalist metropolis, the exploitative metropolis-satellite structure quickly comes to organise and dominate the domestic economic, political and social life of that people. The contradictions of capitalism are recreated on the domestic level and come to generate tendencies toward development in the national metropolis and toward under development in its domestic satellites just as they do on the world level - but with one important difference : ...the national metropolis necessarily suffers from limitations, stultification, or under-development unknown in the world capitalist metropolis - because the national metropolis is simultaneously also a satellite itself while the world metropolis is not

...short of liberation from this capitalist structure or the dissolution of the world capitalist system as a whole, the capitalist satellite countries ... are condemned to under-development<sup>[30]</sup>

The gravity of this relationship is further emphasised by Frank as he wrote:-

... from the world-wide perspective, no country which has been firmly tied to the metropolis as a satellite through incorporation into the world capitalist system has achieved the rank of an economically developed country except by finally abandoning the capitalist system<sup>[31]</sup>

The non-capitalist way to development is viewed with alarm and scepticism by veterans of capitalism, to the extent that

they will block countries who decide to follow a socialist path to development. Just as the United States had forced Japan 'at gun point' to become integrated into the world capitalist system[32], it appears still willing to use 'gun-boast' tactics to force 'erring socialist' countries to re-enter the capitalist system. US hostility towards post-revolutionary Cuba and various destabilising tactics in Latin America and Grenada illustrate the lengths to which they will go.

An important observation to note, is that while Jamaica has been developed as a satellite economy, the island itself has played a 'core' role in relationship with other smaller West Indian Islands and increasingly more recently, Guyana. This 'core' role has been more greatly emphasised with the setting up of Caricom where Jamaica appears to be the major beneficiary through exporting pursuits within the common market, while at the same time, imports from the other countries in the market have remained proportionately smaller.

The Second World War of 1939-45 came at an opportune time for the governments of the West Indies. It provided them with a respite from the serious unemployment which had plagued their societies through the 1930's in particular. The War, in a disguised way, allowed labour emigration to recommence as thousands of Jamaicans went to North America, and England to work in both agriculture and industry. It released the bottle-neck whereby push factors and lack of employment outlets - whether internally or externally - would have created explosive social unrests. With the end of War and reconstruction programmes in its aftermath, old immigration areas once again expanded from the 'closure' of the depression period, and new areas of immigration were resorted to - mainly England at this stage. In addition,

some of the spin-off effects of the economic boom in Metropolitan countries eventually contributed to an improvement in peripheral economies such as Jamaica. The problems which had always forced West Indians to resort to migration, were eased a little, but not cured. Thus by the 1950's, economic push factors were as vibrant as ever.

Money is the chief thing why you go abroad.

Jamaicans, like most immigrants enter the Core with a complex inter-connected series of reasons for their immigration. However as the table below indicates, the over-riding reasons expressed by them were to find a job and earn money to enable them to return home. Thus, when questioned why he decided to emigrate, Mr. Mulwa in chapter five, suggested several reasons, but concluded that 'money is the chief thing why you go abroad'.

At this stage, migrants had a clear perception of the economic role this movement was supposed to play for them, and these are outlined in Table 2.1, which documents reasons given by respondents for their immigration to the UK:-



TABLE 2.1

## DECLARED REASONS FOR COMING TO BRITAIN

Reasons	Respondents	
	Males	Females
	N-24 (%)	N-21 (%)
Easier way of making money	1 (4)	0 (0)
To obtain more money	17 (71)	6 (29)
To seek employment	8 (33)	3 (14)
Fulfill ambition to travel	1 (4)	0 (0)
Needed a change	1 (4)	0 (0)
To gain experience	7 (29)	8 (38)
To further education	3 (12)	4 (19)
To join the Forces (W.W.II)	1 (4)	0 (0)
To join spouse	0 (0)	9 (43)
To keep sister's company	0 (0)	1 (5)

Note: A number of the above include double responses

Source: West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

While 33% male respondents (8), and 14% female respondents (3), said they came 'to seek employment', for the purpose of analysis, it has to be assumed that this is represented amongst those who also said they came to 'obtain more money'. This is because several respondents gave more than one reason for migrating to the UK. No doubt too, that apart from the positive non-monetary motives underlying the desire to be employed, for these migrants - like most other labour migrants - monetary motives are very important in any decision about whether or not to migrate, and the destination.

Of the total male respondents (24) no less than 75% gave the money motive, as their reasons for coming to the UK. Of this 75%, 4% (1) respondent said he came to find an easier way of making money, while 71% (17) said they came 'to obtain more money'. Of the female respondents, none proffered 'an easier way of making money' as a reason for coming to the UK, while 28.7% (6) said they came 'to obtain more money'.

For male respondents, therefore, the monetary motive was of greater significance in their decisions to migrate to the UK. Consequently more than three-quarters gave this as their reason for coming, while only just over one-quarter of female respondents gave economic reasons for coming to the UK. Amongst the economic reasons also, must be placed the sole male respondent who said he came 'to join the Forces in W.W.II'. The respondent, like many of the other recruits returned to the UK shortly after demobilisation in the Caribbean. Although he said that he came to 'join the forces', he had actually been demobbed in the Caribbean and at the time of the interview, was into his second phase of migration to the UK. In explaining his reasons for returning to England he said:-

Well, when I came back I thought ... not knowing what Civvi Street would be like, you know, when you in the Forces you haven't got the opportunity to mix with the ordinary working class people ... going out one night and you met somebody, you can't tell what that is like, can you? And when you get the week-end pass and you go out, you mostly in the Camp ... among soldiers, ... you don't know what civvi street life is like.... 'cause it is entirely different ... everything is being found for you in the ... forces

He proceeded to stress, however,

When I came back for the second time ... all my intention was to work in this country and then go to America..... I was looking forward to say ... well, I would earn a better living up here at the time.

As mentioned previously, although wrapped in ideological reasons, many of the Recruits must have seized this opportunity as a chance to make more money. The government of the time and the Colonial Office saw this movement of people as a way in which they could relieve pressure on the unemployment situation in Jamaica.

A significant percentage of both men and women gave non-monetary reasons for coming to the UK. 54% of all male respondents and no less than 66% of all female respondents felt it was necessary to offer non-monetary reasons for their immigration. For example, two male respondents (8%), gave the general reasons of a desire to 'fulfill ambition to travel' and 'needed a change' respectively, while 29% (7) male respondents and 38% (8) female respondents said that 'to gain experience' was a strong motivating force in their decision to come to the UK. By far, the majority of female respondents 43%, (9) came to 'join spouse' and one came for no other than the kinship support implicit in the explanation 'to keep sister's company'. (In such a period of intense alienation which many of the early immigrants experienced, this latter reason should not be treated glibly).

### Conclusion

The above has indicated a state of chronic under-employment and unemployment in certain sectors of the Jamaican economy. This was occasioned partly by colonial policy of under-development, fluctuating sectional economic development which meant that vibrancy in certain sectors of the economy was accompanied by stagnation or decline in others, which manifested themselves in the social and economic position of employees. It appears though, that the notion of a 'mighty push', has to be viewed more critically than simply focussing on adverse economic conditions and concluding that they were responsible for emigration from the island. To do this, would ignore the many complex issues involved in the movement of people.

Despite the existence of obvious economic push factors, it should not be assumed that during the periods of peak

migration from Jamaica, the majority of Jamaican migrants to England were social destitutes. Many were largely from amongst the most enterprising and successful groups of artisans and small farmers.

Further, the economic improvement in the Island during the late 1950s and early 60s, acted as a 'push' because people's aspirations increased as a result of improved material gains at home, which could not be fully satisfied there. Thus, despite an expanding economy and increased wealth in the country on a national level (albeit uneven through sectional development) - emigration continued.

The following two chapters, while examining the relevance of existing migration theories in analyses of Jamaican migration to Britain, explores the notion that perceptions, formed as a result of colonial and post-colonial relationships, was possibly the most important dynamic factor generating the flow from Jamaica to Britain.

## Endnotes - Chapter 2

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- [8] Stone, Carl : Democracy and Clientalism in Jamaica (1980 : 129) Phns. Transaction Books, New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London, U.K.
- [9] Babu, Abdul : African Socialism & Socialist Africa (1981 [1980]) Phns. Ied, London.
- [10] Male informant from Antrovy, St. James, Jamaica. The people in the District did mainly farming, according to him and he too farmed his mother's land, before he left home. He was the fifth child in his family of eight children. He said he started working for salary at the age of 21 years old - 'working his little field', but left home shortly to become a baker in Spanish Town. He lived and worked there for about 25 years. He said he was sacked, but later managed to get onto the Farm Workers Scheme to go to America. It is necessary to note that this informant, like many others, had access to family land in his district. However, he joined the urban track to, as he said, 'seek work'.

He started as a floor boy in a Bakery for a salary of seven shillings a week. After six months he progressed to oven man on a salary of £1.10/-. He believed this was very low and that's why he went to America to look money. (Previously he said he was sacked, and this may have had to do with disputes about money). This informant seemed to have been in constant waged employment, but had monetary problems and had to rely on his father-in-law to provide money to help him both when he got married at the age of 40, and also when he

- wanted to come to England, the former sold two cows to provide him with the fare money.
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- [31] Ibid
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**CHAPTER 3****A CRITIQUE OF  
VARIOUS THESES ON JAMAICAN  
EMIGRATION****Introduction**

In Chapter two it was shown that although under-employment and to a lesser extent, unemployment, were endemic in Jamaica for a very long time, it was stressed that to regard these adverse conditions as the only motivating force behind labour emigration, especially the movement to Britain in the post-war period, is to display a lack of understanding of the complex nature of inter-play between existing conditions on the eventual outcome of an event. A noteworthy fact, as was pointed out, is that the peak in emigration from Jamaica occurred at a period of economic up-turn in the Island. Thus, one would be forgiven for assuming that in such a relative state of vibrancy, employment opportunities would have been increased, thereby deterring an outward flow. It was, however, this very positive economic performance, which propelled emigration. Having benefited from the spin-off effects of the vibrant Jamaican economy, their raised aspirations now became frustrated as avenues to capital accumulation remained closed to them. Consequently the propelling force for many of the emigrants was not simply to obtain a job, but the attraction of accumulating relatively more wealth by working in industrialised Britain.

Caribbean migrants generally, as is the case with most labour migrants, were not from the most destitute sections

of society. Basic financial requirements to facilitate emigration, ensured that people had to be able to afford the ticket, clothes and 'something to tide them over 'till they got a job'. The so called 'push' theory, therefore, only becomes relevant when it is examined in relative terms and its limitations acknowledged. The need for economic enhancement was certainly a strong stimulus behind Britain's labour demands in the post war reconstruction. The converse of this was a need for economic stability which ex-colonials were forced to seek outside of their own country. Emigration as a means of self-advancement had been a tradition amongst Caribbean peoples, long before the movement to Britain began. They sought work mainly in surrounding countries in the region - especially Central and North America.[1]

In this chapter I attempt to show that in the Jamaican/UK migration there were two processes operating concurrently. The one being a purely economic response, while the other involved a period of psychological adaptation where people came to believe and accept that Britain was, indeed, a country to which they could emigrate. Importantly also, it is suggested here that psychological adaptation was the most crucial factor in the initial stages of labour immigration to this country from Jamaica. Essentially, it is intended to emphasize the important role played by War Recruits during the last World War, in acquainting people back home about the accessibility of England to them.

#### Some Traditional Explanations for Migration

Ruth Glass,[2] one of the earliest writers on West Indian/U.K. migration stressed the pressure of population, natural disasters of floods and hurricanes and a high level of unemployment and under-employment as push factors of West Indians to Britain. Glass focused on immediate adverse economic conditions and contrasted these with the apparent ease with which jobs could be found in Britain. This,



together with the West Indians legal rights to enter Britain as colonial citizens, caused the migration to take place. Peach,[3] however when writing a few years later cautioned against placing too much emphasis on push factors. He pointed out that in relation to migration from the West Indies 'Similar and worse conditions have existed in the West Indies without giving rise to emigration; previous migrations have coincided with periods of demand outside the Islands rather than with crises of surplus labour internally.' Significantly also, the migration from Jamaica took place against a background of improving conditions in the country. Thus, as the demand for labour was increasing internally, emigration increased too.

The situation whereby economic growth coincided with emigration from the homeland was not peculiar to the West Indies. In writing of Sweden, William Petersen stated that:-

... mass emigration developed during a period of unprecedented rise in the general standard of living. Thus, the operation of economic causes, because it was contrary to what might be expected, the rise in the standard of living raised the general level of aspiration, and this change in sentiment may have affected the attitude toward migration.[4]

A general improvement in the West Indians' life-styles might have been responsible for higher material aspirations and in a situation where rising aspirations and expectations develop in a context of sectional economic development, could force people to resort to migration. Further, if a society has a long established history of labour emigration, people would have been psychologically 'tuned' to regard out-migration as necessary for self improvement. This being the case, an improvement in the economy would not result in an immediate change in individual's perception.

The Walter-McCarran Act of 1952

This Act is often claimed to be responsible for the switch of West Indians to Britain. It blatantly discriminated against non-European stock and thus broke a long established tradition whereby the Americas, and increasingly the US had acted as the main receiving country for West Indian labour migrations. This had resulted not only in unregulated labour movements, but also in contractual arrangements between the governments of the West Indies and the United States. Most people in the region either had relations or friends who had been to America, made money and were able to return home and 'improve themselves'. Thus, it was a common belief that one could make good in the 'States'.

For poor people in the Caribbean, farm-work is often the only way in which families could hope to raise necessary funds to gain some economic autonomy. A notable feature of this scheme is that, in theory, good health and a clean police record were the only official pre-requisites to gaining a place. Many people - though quite poor before, were able on their return, to establish themselves, whether by purchasing more land, animals, start a business or expand existing enterprises.

A second movement from Jamaica into the US, took the form of a non-contractual movement - in that it was subject only to normal immigration laws. Migrants in this movement usually entered industrial outlets (mostly service) or as domestic servants. The significant role which these labour movements played in reinforcing people's beliefs about the connection between migration and self-improvement should not be overlooked.

For West Indians, farm contract work was always second choice against the usual non-contracted movement into the US. Contract work was hard, non-unionised, low remunerative and dangerous. To break contract was a criminal offence,

thus return was legally binding. In contrast to this, the normal immigration route ensured that as long as immigrants had met statutory requirements, they were free to go wherever they chose in the States, work with whom they chose, leave to seek new jobs and most importantly, they were usually covered by Trade Unions or legal requirements pertaining to wages and working conditions. In short, therefore, these non-contract workers were able to accumulate much more funds (often they took two jobs). If the farm workers were able to return home economically better off, these other workers - so long as fate had served them well - had the potential for realising their entrepreneurial aims much more quickly and successfully.

In 1952, however, McCarran's Act drastically curtailed this source of capital formation which previously funded self improvement projects at home and emigration to the UK, when that movement began to progress. Secondly, and more crucial for the migration to Britain, the Act may have adversely affected the quality of labour to the UK by the way in which it closed off industrial and 'Metropolitan' initiation. Earliest migrants to Britain had often spent some time previously in the States. These experiences had helped to break down the 'strangeness' of large scale mechanisation and industrialisation. Thus the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society as Britain was less traumatic for those workers. Initially, they might have been slower than the 'seasoned' UK industrial worker, nevertheless, their performance must have been better than if they had come straight from a completely uninitiated background. Even for those who were not directly employed in industrial sectors, one could not live in a highly mechanised society as the US without it affecting their approach to mechanization.

### Implosion of Caribbean Labour

Because of their historical connection, the flow of West Indian and other colonial migrants to Britain seemed inevitable, once the 'Mother Country' was perceived as being 'open'. Though, as mentioned earlier, the McCarran Act could be blamed for causing a premature increase in the volume of West Indian immigration to Britain during the early 1950's, it did not cause the movement to take place initially. This movement to England began on a notable scale, at least from 1948 - five years before the McCarran Act!

Immigration of large numbers of colonials to the Metropolis must be seen as the final stage in the colonisation process. The colonised capitulates completely to the political, economic and psychological domination of the coloniser. This is one of the most serious aspects of colonialism. It is possible that at this stage, to quote Mahogunje:

In place of traditional self-confidence, the people (are) reduced to a state of imitative dependence, a highly degraded state associated not only with an inability to provide themselves adequately with the material means of sustenance but also with the loss of cultural and psychological integrity.<sup>[3]</sup>

By the time mass migration begins to take place from the periphery to the core, the immigrant often feels that he is allowed to 'use' the Metropole for his advantage, thus he often feels a strong sense of obligation toward the Core - (at least initially). Despite his immigration however the Core is able to bring in and expel labour at will.

Peach believed that labour migrations from the Caribbean did not flow in an unregulated way, nor does he believe stimuli within the sending countries were responsible for the actual 'motion'. He wrote:-

There is strong evidence for the view that migration was reacting not to internal conditions, but to a single external stimulus. The evidence of the demand for labour in Britain confirms this hypothesis. The migration rose and fell, according to the demand for labour from year to year. Thus, the movement was not continuously increasing. When demand fell away, as it did between 1957 and 1959, there was a corresponding decrease in West Indian immigration ... It seems that as the movement progressed, the reaction to demand for labour became faster. Not only did total numbers show this sensitivity to British conditions, but that group, the men, which was most intimately connected with the demand for labour showed a correspondingly greater reaction within the group. When the total numbers declined, the proportion of men also declined; when the total number rose, their proportion rose[6]

Table 3:1 shows the flow of emigration from Jamaica for the 1953-61 period:-

**TABLE 3 (1)**  
**MIGRANTS DEPARTING FOR THE U.K.**  
**FROM JAMAICA : 1953-1961**

Years	Total	Men	Women	Children
1953	2,000			
1954	8,000			
1955	18,564	11,515	6,718	331
1956	17,302	9,144	7,877	581
1957	13,087	6,257	6,097	733
1958	9,993	4,425	4,509	1,059
1959	12,796	6,410	4,955	1,431
1960	32,060	18,372	11,258	2,430
<b>Total</b>				
1955-60	103,802	56,123	41,114	6,565
to April 1961	11,462	5,690	4,723	1,049

Source: Ministry of Labour, Jamaica -  
Reproduced in R.B. Devision's West Indian Migrants (p.8)[7]

The figures reveal an overall downward trend from 1956 to 1958. This was characterised by a decrease of 5% in 1956, becoming more marked in 1957 with a decrease of 14% from the 1955 immigration flow. The trough was reached in 1958 when there was a drastic decline of 36% from the 1955 inflow of 18,564 immigrants.

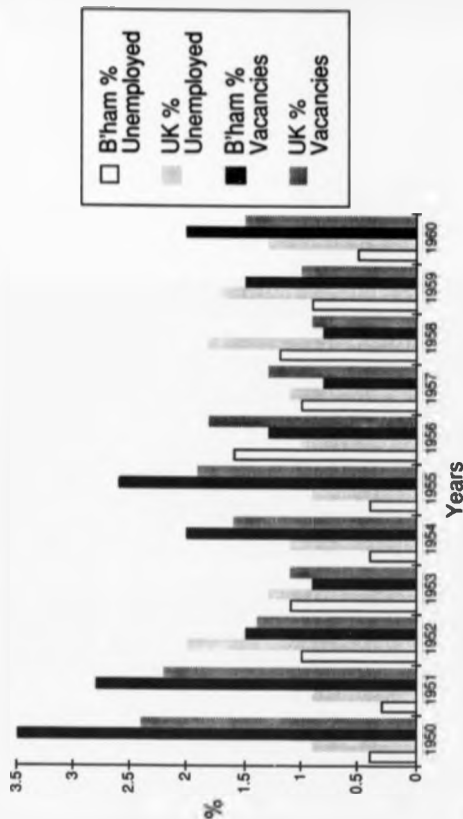
The actual decrease in emigration for 1957 was approximately 4,300. There was a slide in 1958 which was more marked in the last five months, and this 'malaise' continued through to July of 1959. By August, however, there was an upturn and by December the total number to leave Jamaica in the August-December period, more than doubled the number leaving in the January-July period. Further, the total overall immigration figure for 1959 was only 291 persons less than the total number which entered the country in 1957.

In an attempt to explain the decrease in 1957, the Ministry of Labour in Jamaica suggested that:-

The novelty of the idea of being able to go to England has probably worn off. Conditions in Jamaica have improved significantly in the past few years. The backlog of enthusiasts or persons anxious to try their fortunes abroad has been worked off with the availability of transport from 1955 onward. Conditions in the United Kingdom in particular, the greater difficulty in securing jobs, have probably also served to discourage the movement somewhat.<sup>18</sup>

They went on to stress also that although factors in Jamaica are largely responsible for emigration, the movement to England has tended to roughly follow unemployment movements in the U.K. Fig. 3:[1] below, shows economic fluctuations in the U.K. in terms of the percentage registered unemployed as well as the percentage vacancies in June of each year from 1950-1960.

# ECONOMIC FLUCTUATIONS : 1950-60



On a micro level, and in keeping with the spectrum of this study, it is difficult to discover the relationship between Jamaican immigration, vacancies and levels of employment in Birmingham. This is mainly because no year by year assessment of immigration with ethnic breakdowns were undertaken.

Throughout the 1953-63 period, the Midlands was continuously below the rest of Britain generally, as evidenced in the graph below. Fig. 3; (2)

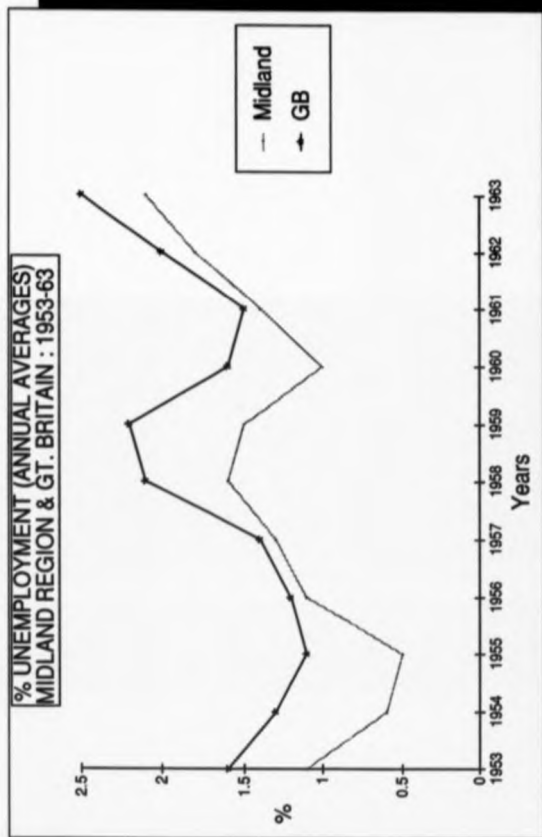
For the 1956-1958 period there was a sharper decline in percentage vacancies in Birmingham than in the rest of the country. The decline was more marked in the 1955-57 period, showing little or no actual change in 1958 and by 1959, employment vacancies had increased once more to the 1952 level. From 1959 onwards, apart from the 1961-1962 when Birmingham's employment vacancies fell below the rest of the country, but gaining equality in 1963, the City continued to exhibit a higher employment vacancy right through to 1970.

As mentioned previously there does not seem to be any annual breakdown of Jamaican immigrants to Birmingham. However, it does appear that immigrants were urged to avoid the City during periods of most severe economic downturn. For example, the Jamaican Daily Gleaner kept a tab on what was happening in Birmingham to the extent of relaying relevant articles from the Birmingham Post to Jamaica. Consequently, in June 1956, in the middle of Birmingham's worst economic down-turn the paper reported:-

There are now more coloured people out of work in the Midlands than ever before. No one knows for sure just how many because no racial discrimination is made in compiling official unemployment statistics. What is known, however, is that two out of every three West Indian immigrants to Britain now make directly for the Midlands. A few months ago the proportion was no greater than 50 per cent ..... They come, tempted by reports of plentiful jobs and good wages received from friends and relatives already established here. They know nothing of the great change in the industrial situation in recent months<sup>[9]</sup>



FIG. 3 (2)



The following month - July - the paper commented that whereas jobs were confirmed for immigrants arriving in London, those who went to the Midlands had little chance of obtaining one. The paper implied that it was a strike rather than a general economic downturn which was responsible for a shrinkage in vacancies. However, as emphasised in the Gleaner both in July and August, it appears that West Indians had taken the warnings and avoided Birmingham.

And yet, an uncritical acceptance of the 'prior knowledge of employment theory' as purported by Peach in the U.K./West Indian migrations, would leave one guilty of regarding migrants as automata - brought into motion only in response to job availability information. However, human migratory actions are such more complex than simple reactions to 'jobs/go' and 'no jobs/stop'.

Firstly, The information volunteered by informants appear to dispute the notion that their movements were directed by adverse information from relations and peers in the U.K. both because it seems that this kind of information was not sufficiently forthcoming; Secondly, although a few returnees managed to get letters published in the local press, the ability of these to dissuade people is questionable. For example, only a minority of migrants would have had regular access to the daily newspaper, and these would have been mainly those living in urban areas. Consequently, except for relayed information by word of mouth, they would have been ignorant of these letters. More importantly, however, even if they did have access to this information, many people would have condemned the failures of writers of the letters in Appendix : 3.(a) as owing to their 'worthlessness' and inability to exploit opportunities. Finally, it was left to the Caribbean Welfare Service to inform intending migrants about employment possibilities in Britain, these however, appeared to have been ineffective. Webster wrote:-

.... neither in the West Indies, nor in England itself is the Caribbean Welfare Service sufficiently heard from. Here in Jamaica, for example, people only turn to the Service when they have completed their departure plans. Thus it is that after they have sold their land-holding or other means of livelihood such as animals, sewing machine, small shop or quit the job, intending migrants remember the Service might be of use to them.

When they visit the local office, it is more with the idea of obtaining explicit directions what to do when they arrive in Britain, than with any other hope. By then they have purchased clothing to wear in a cold climate; the passage has been booked or at least a part substantially paid down on. The die is cast. Only departure date is awaited.

At this stage, all that the Welfare Service here can do is to try to make a little smoother, what undoubtedly will be tough sledding for migrants who are not joining relatives already settled in Britain.<sup>(10)</sup>

Nor did the Travel Agents in Jamaica believe that immigrants were deterred by adverse information from England. For example, on her Fact Finding Tour in 1956, Aimee Webster, wrote:-

Jamaicans are continuing to migrate to England in large numbers in spite of firsthand reports of the grim prospects there. Particularly is the lessening of employment being stressed by most of the expatriates who have been able to raise their passages to return home. But are their sorry stories deterring others from trying their luck in Britain? True, the Immigration Department's figures do show some decline since the onset of colder weather. But is that the establishment of a definite curve in migration to Britain? The Travel agencies don't seem to think so since the schedules of what typically are migrant ships have not varied from peak times.<sup>(11)</sup>

One possible explanation for the correlation between a decline in West Indian migration and an increase in unemployment in England may be due to the role of the immigrants already in England, in financing the passages of people from home. Table 3 [2] below, gives an indication of the degree to which this was the case in 1961:-

TABLE 3 [2]

**JAMAICA : Finance of Travel**  
**Proportion of passage money obtained from**  
**stated source**

				Per Cent	
				Men	women
<b>Loans</b>				34	12
i]	From U.K.			24	18
ii]	In Jamaica				
	private			15	8
	loan company ..			3	-
<b>Gifts</b>					
i]	From U.K.	..	..	15	54
ii]	from Jamaica	..		9	9

Source: Sample Survey, Jamaica - Revision Page 32(12)

No less than 42% obtained loans from relatives and friends in the U.K., and as many as 69% of the fares were straight gifts, and this occurred at a time when Jamaica was going through a period of unprecedented economic growth which would have had a spin-off effect on the prosperity of intending migrants. It is, therefore possible that during the 1950's a larger percentage relied on finances from the U.K., to help them emigrate. Table 3 [3] indicates the source of migration funding for WMID:-

TABLE 3 (1)

## SOURCE OF FINANCING IMMIGRATION TO U.K. FROM JAMAICA

Method of funding trip	Male	Female
<u>One Response</u>		
1) Use of Saving in Jamaica	11	9
2) Salary .. .. .	1	-
3) <u>Sale of</u>		
i) animals .. .. .	6	2
ii) bicycle .. .. .	1	-
iii) Family home .. .. .	1	-
iv) Land .. .. .	1	-
4) <u>Loans from</u>		
i) relatives in Jamaica	1	-
ii) relatives in U. K.	1	-
iii) friends in Jamaica	1	-
5) <u>Gifts from:</u>		
i) relatives in Jamaica	3	1
ii) relatives in U. K.	2	8
6) <u>Other</u>		
i) Rehabilitation money (returnee soldier)	1	-

Source : West Midlands Interview Data - 1968

Like Davidson's Sample, the source of migration funding originated in the UK, this was particularly so for women.

If such a large proportion of migrants customarily relied on help from abroad to pay their fares, it is not surprising that in a period of economic downturn in England, the flow of funds would have been adversely affected and this in turn would be reflected in the decreased flow of migrants. It is a fact that migrants are vulnerable during such situations and if they lose their jobs or had no chance to do over-time work, funds for loans and gifts were curtailed.

The following two articles emphasise most vividly ways in which faulty generalisations can be obtained by focussing completely on macro and micro economic factors, and more particularly, by over-emphasising perspectives in the receiving country. While the first article has a direct

bearing on the subject, the second is coincidental - but nevertheless, significant to the actual migration flow from Jamaica:-

**TRAVEL FRAUD : £65,000 TAKEN IN DEALS LAST YEAR**

A total of £65,000 was said to have been fraudulently converted by travel agents in Jamaica during last year.

This was disclosed in the No.2 Home Circuit Court yesterday by Detective Sergeant Jess Marston

Sergeant Marston, told the Court, presided over by Mr. Justice Small, that during the year 1956 there were eight cases of frauds involving travel agencies and money amounting to £65,000

In the case against Ferguson, the Detective said, were twenty-seven complainants, and the money involved amounted to £2,265. Of this amount none of it had been refunded to any of the complainants<sup>[13]</sup>

From the newspaper articles, a total of £67,265 was fraudulently mis-appropriated between 1956 and 1957. This figure represented approximately 897 full fares at £75 each adult fare. It is, however, more representative if these figures were regarded as both full and part-payments. It is not possible to determine how many people had their attempts to travel to England thwarted because of frauds - yet whose cases did not come to Court. What is clear, however, is that frauds accounted for a sizeable percentage of the reduction in emigration from Jamaica in 1957, a year highlighted by Peach because of the 'significant' reduction in immigration.

Frauds, however, were not the only things responsible for reduced emigration from Jamaica in that year. On 2nd March, 1957, the Gleaner reported that:-

The heaviest earthquake in fifty years rocked Jamaica early last evening.<sup>[14]</sup>

By the 5th, when a clearer picture of the damage became known, the Gleaner reported:-

Hundreds Homeless - Mrs. Manley (after touring the affected areas) said, 'What I have seen sent me home a deeply distressed person. Literally hundreds of persons in the hill villages are homeless.

.... I don't think anyone in the other parts of the country can imagine the suffering and loss that has come upon the hill people of St. James, Hanover, and Westmoreland, ... In Woodlands, Hanover, over 300 persons - adults and children are homeless and in Watford Hill, 56 homes have been completely smashed<sup>[15]</sup>

Just one day before the earthquake - the 1st of March, 1937, the Gleaner had reported that 'The largest number of migrants since last September, left to seek jobs in the United Kingdom yesterday evening.'<sup>[16]</sup> The number of migrants involved was 250 and while this was certainly not a large number compared to previous emigrations, nevertheless, it served as a pointer that despite the many articles in the paper and alleged letters from relations, discouraging people from going to England, they were still prepared to try their luck! In November of 1956, Aimee Webster, writing several articles on migration in the Gleaner, stressed:

Wholly baseless optimism continues. The would-be migrant believes that his luck would be better than those of Jamaicans who have come back<sup>[17]</sup>

While accepting, therefore, that adverse economic conditions in Jamaica often militated against a desire for self advancement, they do not explain the size and nature of emigration flows. A study of 'push' factors on a macro level does not explain the subtle nuances underlying individual aspirations or perceptions regarding the possibility of realising these ambitions in Core countries. At best then, a study of economic factors both at source and destinations, sheds light on the propensity for emigration, not on the actual dynamics of such movements.

England - 'A Field For Immigration'

The end of World War II found Miss 'V', then a 25 year old woman in Kingston. She had left home in the rural area of . Manover to seek work and keep the company of her eldest sister who had got married and moved to live in the capital. I questioned her about the effects of the last World War on Jamaica and people's lives generally:-

Ques: Were there any special changes in Jamaica (which) you believed were a direct result of the War?

Ans: The only changes I believe is ... . am ... if it hadn't been for the War, England would not be opened for immigration. It would never be .... it wouldn't be the field of immigration.

Ques: Why do you say that?

Ans: England was never the field for immigration, we were taught in school that England is not the field for immigration and . am, if it hadn't been for the War, we would ... none of us would think of coming here, because we were taught that it's not a field for immigration.

Ques: But what does that mean though?

Ans: A field for immigration? Immigrants cannot come here, people cannot come here to live.

Ques: Why do you think they taught you that?

Ans: Because nobody ... am, they wouldn't have anybody over here. I don't know for any other country but .. we were taught that England do not immigrate people.

Ques: .... you say that it was advertised in the newspapers and over the radio that England wanted people to go and work. What sort of people went?

Ans: Working class people - all different kinds of people went. Some people ... . am ... self-employed ... for instance a shoemaker or so is self-employed and he would give up his job and



come and try over here. Some sell out what they have because they have to pay their fare to come over here. Some of them want to gain experience, not that they weren't living over there ... but they want to gain experience, you know. And they sold out their possession and then come over here to make ... start life anew.

It is significant that this informant attributed Jamaican immigration to Britain, as a direct consequence of the War. It was active recruitment by the Mother Country, as a result of reconstruction needs, which, to her, made this wave of immigration possible. Prior to the War there was a strong belief that 'England do not immigrate people' Consequently, she said 'if it hadn't been for the War .... none of us would think of coming here'. With such a powerful controlling tool as formal school education to stress the closure of England to would-be immigrants, the mere knowledge of vacancies would not have been enough to prompt them to attempt to come. Not only did their emigration necessitate active recruitment from the receiving country, there needed to be a psychological adaptation. This could be identified as a lag in the initial stages of emigration as people's perception changed to enable them to accept the new circumstances and act on them.

#### Conclusion

In deliberating this chapter, I have attempted to show that although traditional notions of migration have usually been explained by way of push/pull theories. The danger of this approach is that it can become too mechanistic, thereby ignoring the complex interplay which varies from migration to migration.

Despite Peach's perceived correlation between immigration flows from the Caribbean and employment vacancies in the UK, the movement was not as synchronized as perceived. Lawrence too challenged Peach in 1974 because his data of 72 Jamaicans in Nottingham revealed a high proportion who felt

that migration to the UK for them took place because of the relative ease with which they could enter the country - as opposed to the US. From my argument above, I would suggest that this is a common-sense notion of the process of migration, but that for the scholar of migration, such explanations cannot be divorced from their historical contexts.

Despite pressing need for economic gains, and the knowledge that one could make good by emigrating to what was considered to be more vibrant economies, the propelling force behind Jamaicans leaving their country and coming to Britain was often based on perceived rather than actual knowledge of specific job vacancies. As such, it was a psychological response which meant that even when reports about adverse conditions in Britain were relayed to would-be migrants, 'senseless optimism prevailed'. This is because psychological responses are often much more difficult to change, despite knowledge of conflicting evidence. Yet, before people could be activated to travel, they needed convincing that the Motherland was open to them as labour migrants.

The emergence of both World Wars, and in particular the latter necessitated a relatively large number of recruits actually coming to live in Britain and it is at this stage that psychological barriers began to be eroded. The returning recruits were instrumental in 'acquainting' people back home with the knowledge that England was really accessible to them as immigrants. Importantly too, they informed people about the ways of the English, and of British life generally. Thus, as new information was received it helped to change initial pre-conceptions. Consequently, from a trickle of returning War Recruits the Movement continued to gather momentum to include, firstly (it would seem), peer groups then spouses and later to a more general mass migration including children.

## Endnotes : Chapter 3

- [1] Thomas-Hope, W. : Hopes and Reality in The West Indian Migration to Britain - Journal of Oral History, Pps. 36
- [2] Glass, R. : Memories the West Indians in London - Phns. Centre for Urban Studies and Allen & Unwin London, 1960.
- [3] Peach, C. : West Indian migration to Britain, a social geography - Phns. Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations London, (1968 : 38-41).
- [4] Petersen, W. : Planned Migration - The Social Determinants of the Dutch-Canadian Movement, (1959 : 44).
- [5] Mahogunje, A. : The Development process, a spatial perspective (1980 : 49), Phns. Hutchinson, London.
- [6] Peach, C. opcit. (41)
- [7] Davison, R.B. : West Indian Immigrants - Social and Economic Facts of Migration From the West Indies, (1962 : 81), Oxford University Press.
- [8] Source: Ministry of Labour, Jamaica, (1957).
- [9] Daily Gleaner, 'Proble of Placing coloured workers', 15th June, 1956
- [10] Webster, A. : 'Migrants in England : No bed of roses there', Daily Gleaner, 17th November, 1956.
- [11] Ibid
- [12] Davison, R.B. opcit P.32
- [13] Daily Gleaner
- [14] Ibid, Report on earthquake, 2nd March, 1957
- [15] Ibid, Follow-up Report on earthquake, 5th March, 1957
- [16] Ibid, Report on Migrants Departure for UK, 1st March, 1957
- [17] Ibid, 17th, November, 1956

**CHAPTER 4****AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE  
OF  
PERCEPTION  
IN  
STIMULATING JAMAICA/UK  
MIGRATION****Introduction**

Economic, social and political factors, while creating conditions for migrations to take place, cannot in themselves, bring about the actual movements within and across boundaries. The essential force for such movements to occur, very often is the product of human perceptions, as they relate to both the origin and destinations of migratory movements. According to spatial theorists<sup>[1]</sup>, human beings form mental images of places - whether in their own country or another, and these images are the products of information which has been received, categorized - positive or negative - and then stored in their minds. The images, they suggest, can be set out as a map - just as with physical topography, with the places of perceived preferences shown as peaks or mountainous areas and the less desirable places indicated as troughs or valleys. Most of this information is only recalled when the individual has to make decisions which have direct relevance for geographic locations; for example, if one needs to seek employment, change residence or migrate to another country. In these instances, the mental preference maps become instrumental in the decision making process. It goes without saying that people will avoid the trough areas as unsuitable for the various activities previously

mentioned and will seek instead to reside in areas which are perceived as mountains or peak of preference on their mental maps.

Mental map constructs can be used to indicate individual spatial preferences, after discriminate selection of information. With this in mind, it becomes easier to regard international migrations, not simply as responses to economic and social deprivations in the one and possibility of attainment in the other. More importantly, migrations can be regarded as the product of psychological and spatial interaction. This chapter attempts to show that perception - borne out of historical colonial relationship was crucial in the actual migration to the UK from the Caribbean.

#### Perception and Migration Destination

In many instances, migration intention and destination is usually well established in the minds of would-be migrants long before the actual movements. Even in cases of pogroms, wars, genocide and natural disasters, many refugees will already have a particular destination preference mapped in their minds. There may be particular inhibiting factors which prevent the would-be migrant reaching preferred destination, whether these be legal restrictions, lack of funds etc., which might force an individual to settle for a less preferred destination or postpone final move.

For example, many of the Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe - intended to reach North America ultimately as they trekked from their homes. They had come to regard America as the 'land of opportunity, equality and religious freedom', thus, when they moved - voluntarily or involuntarily - from home, they already had a destination preference well established in their minds. It was often necessary to enter England as the first

stage of their journey - either because of transportation routes or the need to raise the balance of the travel costs - some having left their homes in a state of destitution. For many of these migrants, their stay in England was short, depending on available transportation on the trans-continental route. Others stayed on for a while to work their fares. A number, however, remained, as new information, experiences and circumstances caused them to change their destination preference.

Undoubtedly for some of those who remained, the choice was 'second best', as they became 'trapped' in the sweatshops of the many urban slums of Britain, still regarding America as their preferred destination, but lacking the means with which to get there. We see, then, that new experiences and knowledge can cause individuals to change their spatial preferences and old mental images can be replaced with new ones. Likewise, individuals can retain their spatial preferences, yet be prevented from realising them, either because they lack the funds or are debarred by legal or psychological restrictions. For these people, their perception of the U.S. as a 'land of freedom and promise' was enough to make them want to travel thousands of miles to get there and incurring great expense. The US was much more geographically remote than other countries to which they could emigrate, but remoteness was not a real prohibitive factor. Afterall, according to Gould and White, [2] 'remoteness is partly a mental construct and need not be defined simply in terms of the exotic shore or the Australian bush. If other conditions are right, actual spatial distance is no real barrier, as people will devise ingenious plans to achieve their goals. 'Just as an individual will travel further to visit a good friend than (one) would to visit a more casual acquaintance. In these situations the ideas of social proximity and physical distance interact to produce a particular response, be it a journey, a letter or a phone call.'

Perceptions, therefore, often determine ones preference for a place, a thing or situations. This is very important because of their possible long-term effects on people's actions, for as Mauer indicates:-

Perceptions are quick to form but then resist change. Once we have formed an impression about an object, event, or situation, we are biased toward continuing to perceive it in the same way .... People's tendencies to perceive the expected, and to assimilate new information to existing images, make it far easier to reinforce a target's existing beliefs than to change them. [3]

Where these perceptions are close to reality, it makes adjustment to new situations less traumatic. If, however, ones preconceived ideas bear little or no relation to the truth, any necessary adjustments are likely to be less easy.

Consequently, as with the pioneering migrations to the New World, West Indian migrants would have discarded adverse information which conflicted with their perceptions about the possibility of a better life in England during the post-war periods of the 1940s and through to the 1960s. This was especially true of the earliest periods before adverse news about life in England, relayed from earlier migrants - some of whom had begun to return home - disillusioned, forced people to re-evaluate their perceptions. Mrs. Lynn's story sheds some light on this point:-

Ques: Why did you decide to go to England?

Ans: Well, afte mi si tings was... mi si tings wasn't improving well... tings wasn't improving well, so mi bredda fire' leave ... (but dat one is not mi madda chila ... is mi fadda)... an him told ... (is I an him did have di shop)... an him told mi dat when him go an see how it stay, him will write mi and tell mi and if mi want to come, him will help mi ... an' I tell him yes. Well, when him went up, tings was good, him work an' him ... an' we were gwine get married ....

Ques: He was going to get married?

Ans: He ... an' mi sen tell him ... an him seh mi not to buy nutting for he will sen out mi married tings dem.

Him sen di money an mi buy mi married dress ..mi buy di cloth out here, give to mi dress-maker an him sen di money to buy mi shoes, buy mi head- dress ... an two parcels with mi second dress and shoes and mi brother shoes and clothes..to be mi Best Man ... mi Give-Away ... an all his clothes him sen ... two big box mi get wid tings.

When mi si dat, mi say 'we naw stay ya!

Ques: (laugh) after he sent those things? ... Why?

Ans: . Aam ... because mi didn't have no money, fi buy it ... mi didn't have no money ... so him sen an help mi. Mi seh well mi gwine go afta mi married ..... mi gwine go ... no mine ... mi an mi husband .... mi gwine go...

Ques: So because he sent those things you felt he was doing well in England so you could do well too?

Ans: Mi could do well! ... We are working people an dem seh if yu can work yu will live up there ..yu only want to work ...don't be lazy ...And afta we married ..him seh him gwine sen mi passage ..And di other year him sen mi passage....'60 (1960) ..an him sen di whole a mi passage ..I pay '85 ..No it was '75 ...an mi mak it to '85 because wi did waan go on di firs' class ..mi and mi husband

Ques: You went first class? Why did you choose first class?

Ans: For dem seh, down di deck yu sick down dare an' all kinna yu ..six ...seven a yu inna one cabin an' wi didn't want dat, yu si ...wi didn't like di mix-up ..so wi get a ...wi didn't really get a cabin fi wiself for di plane people dem did ..aam ..dem did forfeit di plane an' dem sen dem on di ship ..so di ship did carry more 'an even what dem did book for

Ques: When you thought of England, what kinds of things did you think about before you went?

Ans: Well, mi fren seh she wouldn't ..an mi bradda .Jan mi bradda wife seh dem not telling mi .mi sus come an see for maself.



- Que=: Oh really! They didn't tell you anything?
- Ans: Nutting! ..Nutting! ..dem only seh mi sus' come an see for meself.
- Que=: So you really didn't know if things was hard or ..easy ..or what ..No idea!
- Ans: But mi just glad to go ..mi seh wedda (whether) good ..bad ..mi going ..mi seek up mi mine ..if mi even dead ..seek dem bury mi ...! (laugh) ..but nobody waan't dying dem time ..mi navva hear nobody die.
- Que=: Did you learn in school ..did you learn anything about England? ..You know when you were young, did you think of England as a special place?
- Ans: Well, dem always tell mi seh ovva deh cold ..it cold an dem always tell mi seh di people dem ..all when di War ..dem affe under groun an deh oasen get nuttin' to heat (eat) and ting was ...was hard and dem ..because dem drop boom and dem mash up di place ovva deh ..some a di people seh 'Wah unno a go a England fa? For dem a go drop boom up deh pon unno an kill unno ..cause I hear how dem did have di War an one nex' one a go come ..unno naan go live fi come back ..'cause how dem a go boom we up, up there ..Mi seh, chool! ..By di time dat fi come, mi come back home or dead ..Mi jus feel to go!
- Que=: I see ..so no matter what people said, you would have gone because you wanted to go?
- Ans: Mi waan was to go and si for meself, an' learn - an experience ting what mi navva know before
- Que=: Did you feel that by going to England it would help you to improve your' business ...or you weren't thinking about that?
- Ans: Well ..mi seh wi gvine go work ..but mi tink deh did have house work like how we work out here ..being I was domestic ..I didn't know deh didn't have it ..I navva know yu have to work in di factories, or office or hospital an all those ..I didn't know dat it was ..but ..deh wouldn't sen an tell us ..truth ..mi bradde seh him naaw tell mi, mi sus come an si ..for him waan si to come ..for deh not telling mi ..for maybe mi mightn't go come ..deh seh 'come ..come an you will si for yourself

But him write mi sometimes and sometimes mi frens write mi how dem mak party ..dem mak party every week ..den mi seh 'high ..things mus nice up deh! Den how dem seh it so coole? Den how dem mak party ..an people (who) have it hard caan mak party? Mi a go up sah! ..(laugh) ....

Det time, mi navva save ..mi navva get save yet (Not yet a Born Again Christian) ..an when mi hear dem talk about how a night dem gaan ..gaan to di pub ..an I seh wat nama eo? ..Mi waan go si wat dis pub is like ..mi navva know seh it suppen like bar out here ... an

..Tank God ..dem sen out dem picture ..dah look fat an nice ..and dah ..Den mi seh ..'den a how dem a seh bout England coles and England ..Mi! ..Mi naan stay here seh , si goin' ..an mi bradde ..an mi fren ..Den people goin' up ..people going up ..every week yu hear 'a ship load a people goin up ..an mi no hear nobody come back wid no complain ..nor sen' back no complain

Ques: Did you see anybody who came back? Were you in touch with anybody who came back?

Ans: Yes, for dis chap (har son) fadde went up... It wean't mi husband chila.

Ques: What kind of things did he tell you?

Ans: Him seh ..him seh him no like up deh for up deh cold ..an yu haffa live inna fire ..and dem haffa have lomp a night an a sewnin' dem deh in a dis big ole coat ..an heap a complain ..him didn't stay more dan three years.

Ques: But you didn't believe him? You didn't take any notice of what he said?

Ans: Mmm (No) ..because mi did hear mi fren sen an tell mi why him come home ..dem no waan work dem waan keep up all dem woman dem ..a sell out (pimping) ...an all afte dem go up deh with dem dirty ways waan di woman dem go out go work ..so dem radda (rather) come back home ..So mi see him an' him tell mi, but mi navva seh a ting, for me have mi intention to go.

Mi go to a fren at Waterhouse ..an di lady seh ..'Lard misses, yu a go a England! ..if yu nah pay yu..(fare) yet, mi wudda tell yu no guh.' Mi seh 'Why?' Shi seh, 'No man ...if you navva pay' ... (dat time wa a leave nex week) ..'if yu navva pay yu money yet man ..mi wudda tell yu no go up deh a no nutt'n wah you a ..Up deh nasty, up deh dirty ..dem noh cook good like fi

we ...nutt'n up deh no good, mi a tell yu! An  
 wi come back home ..mi seh well good luck  
 ..everybody no have di same luck ..mi goin! Yu  
 understand? Deh cudn't bruk mi mine!<sup>(4)</sup>

Mrs. Lynn certainly had a barrage of discouragement.  
 The significant points here, however, are ways in which  
 she interpreted these reports to fit in with her  
 perceptions. For example:-

New information  
Received

Dem tell mi seh ovva deh  
 cole

(Her son's father) 'went up  
 an him seh him no like  
 up deh for up deh cold ..  
 an yu haffe live inna fire  
 haffe have lasep a night an a  
 savnin ..an heep a complain

Assimilation of conflicting  
 new information to fit  
 perception

Dem sen out dem  
 picture Dem look fat  
 an nice..Dem a how  
 dem seh bout  
 England coole! ..

Every week yu hear a  
 ship load a people  
 going up... an mi no  
 hear nobody come  
 back wid no complain,  
 nor sen back no  
 complain.

Rationalisation : Cold  
 if indeed it existed,  
 did not prevent people  
 from looking fat and  
 nice, nor did it deter  
 others from going to  
 England! She therefore  
 concluded, 'mi  
 naan stay here seh, mi  
 going!

Mi fren sen an tell mi  
 why him come home.  
 Dem no vaan work ...  
 dem vaan keep all dem  
 women pimping), dem go  
 up deh with dem dirty  
 ways vaan di women dem  
 go out go work ..so  
 dem radde come back  
 home.

Similar rationalisation can be observed throughout the  
 whole of the discussions with the respondent. She  
 believed life would be better in England as far as

capital accumulation was concerned and everything relayed from those she most trusted in England appeared to confirm that belief. Consequently, to the final negative report from her friend - a returnee - she concluded that 'everybody no have di same luck!'

Psychological adaptation takes longer to change than the economic variable which partly stimulated them in the first place. In the same way that the movement changed from a trickle to a 'torrent' over the 1948-64 period, having been set in motion, it was less possible to control by adverse information about employment possibilities. Further, as time went on, reports from friends and relations in the UK was not the only influencing factor affecting the decision about whether or not to emigrate. Despite those who returned, having failed to realise their aims, there were others who had been relatively successful and their apparent prosperity would have influenced people about whether to emigrate or not. In the end, it was the Immigration Act of 1962 and harsher immigration barriers which caused a 'virtual stoppage' of West Indian migration to Britain, rather than adverse reports, relayed from relatives in the UK. The interviewees above, entered this country in 1960, at a time when anti-immigrant feelings were high. These were reported in the various media outlets in Jamaica, yet she appeared to have been ignorant of this. Even with first-hand information about some of the adverse conditions of living in England, these were discarded or a pragmatic approach was adopted 'everybody no have di same luck'.

There is, however, another factor to be considered and that is the possibility that the Movement had begun to lose momentum - for various reasons - some of which have been mentioned, including, no doubt adverse reports about life in England. The possibility of a ban, however, which the Act would effect, created a panic reaction and people who might not have come here, had they been left to make a timely decision, rushed to enter the country.

Adverse conditions in Britain did not result in immediate remigration of West Indians, because unlike in their emigration to Britain, at this stage, spatial distance became an important factor. This may be an important factor, because while the 'pioneer' who risks everything to seek a better life abroad is often applauded, there is ridicule awaiting those who, having 'squandered' all they had, returns home empty handed. Many West Indians felt too ashamed to return home with unrealised ambitions - especially as the fare back was so high. As negative reports filtered through the West Indian societies, they no doubt alerted people that all might not be as they believed, yet many thought they would try - in case things worked out better for them.

War Recruits - The Precursors of West Indian/IM  
Immigration

By placing emphasis on the post War period, many writers failed to give due significance to the many West Indians of the War Recruitment groups who went to work in Britain. Their going was significant firstly because they broke the psychological barrier which ensured that even barring the deterrence of distance, most potential labour migrants from the Caribbean would not consider England as a possible area to which they could seek work. By going to England, the Recruits were instrumental in paving the way for others to follow in their footsteps when normalisation occurred at the end of the War. Secondly, a fact that is rarely mentioned, is that these recruits were, in effect, the first West Indian migrants to enter Britain in large numbers to seek work. In 1957, Joyce Egginton wrote:-

From these contradictory (West Indian) Islands, so different from one another in character yet so united in loyalty to Britain, several thousands men came voluntarily to join the Services during the last War. Most of them served as ground staff in the Royal Air Force and during their brief leaves, were often welcomed into English homes. Few people

mentioned the colour bar, for there was something very touching about the sight of a coloured man in British military uniform. He was not only a colonial who had travelled a great distance to fight for the motherland, freely and with little reward; he was also a Negro risking his life so that the country which enslaved his ancestors might remain free. To those English who understood, it was generous and pathetic, like a child who offers a kiss after he has been smacked. [ 5 ]

The naivety of parts of the above statement, is both a commentary and an indictment on many of the early writers on West Indian migration to the UK. It is difficult to imagine the conscious patriotism which would cause the 'Negro (to risk) his life so that the country which enslaved his ancestors might remain free'. Such a notion can be discarded as simplistic rhetoric or racist egotism - unintentional though it might have been.

What could be justifiably argued is that returning recruits, filled with the euphoria of war, helped to engender - through their stories - a sense of 'righteous' humanitarian indignation against the aggressor. The resolve to offer oneself for recruitment, could therefore be regarded as an unconscious response to this 'prior preparation'.

It is a fact that, in the absence of a recourse to coercion, active and passive barterings (even briberies) take place between governments and their civilian populations in cases where extensive labour inputs are required. Thus Britain's ruling males are thought to have conceded the right to vote only after women proved themselves through their work in the Crimea and War preparations generally.

The promise of land was certainly used as a bribe to potential Afro-Caribbean recruits in both World Wars. Likewise, it is conceivable that in the case of colonials their involvement in The Mother Country's War could have been perceived by the former as potentially contributing

to their bid for self-determinism. It is true that Political Independence was a 'carrot' to be gained from Britain but while this might have motivated politically educated recruits, the extent to which it prompted the majority of working class Jamaicans who joined, is debatable.

Additionally, while in the case of Black Americans - the reward of civil rights could have potentially been wrested/accorded as a result of their War involvement, for Afro-Caribbean people - being governed from afar - such barterings were not a pressing consideration; 'ordinary' colonials did not see their civil rights problems as emanating from Britain, but from their local governments.

Explanations such as Egginton's fail to identify a fact which became apparent during my discussions with informants, that is, that many of the people who enlisted amongst the recruits, did so because of the basic desire to fulfill economic needs, thereby exhibiting their character as precursors of labour migrants. Jamaica, like most places in the world, was just coming out of a period of intense economic depression which had left many unemployed or under-employed, unable to meet their economic demands. This, together with the fact that in a climate of rising expectations - especially amongst those forced to return from the US during the 1930s Depression - the propelling factor behind many of them joining up, therefore was, more than likely underlined by the need for economic self-determinism.

Rather than this fact being used to fuel racist rhetoric about 'parasitic economic migrants', it should be regarded as one of the inevitable results, and, in fact, continuation of capitalist exploitation through colonial relationships.

Needless to say, as is the case with most batches of military recruits, there would have been amongst this group, some who were stimulated to go because of their need for excitement, especially as many of them would get a chance to go to England - a place which they had heard so much about yet one which they, nor their relations had ever had the chance to go and see for themselves. No doubt Mr. Marks spoke for a large number of people who joined the band of recruits at that time:-

Quas: Did you feel that because Britain was involved in the War... you ought to come to help and defend Britain?

Ans: To tell the truth, I never look at it that way, I just take it as an adventure. I say ... well, I'll join the Forces and travel abroad to see what living is like abroad ... But when I came here (to Birmingham), I was shocked to see the difference in situation ... (6)

Many would have seen this as their only chance to travel abroad - especially to Europe. Others would also, undoubtedly have been stimulated by patriotic reasons - though the extent to which this can be differentiated from a need for self-preservation is doubtful. The War was fought mainly in Europe, but the fate of the colonies were inextricably linked with Britain and from the tales of ordinary Jamaicans, their fears of attack were very real. The following extract from Mr. Lyons, a man who was at school at the time; highlights this point:-

Quas: Have you got any memories of the last World War in Jamaica?

Ans: ...I was at school, I remember the last World War ... and what I remember is ... aah ... foreign supply to us was minimal ... you know ... We couldn't get kerosene oil to burn, you know, the lamps, we couldn't get soap and ... many of the things that had was to be imported ... we couldn't get them and that made things very hard for us ... we didn't have electricity and the kerosene oil ... we used in the lamps to give light at nights and ... we had was to sleep in darkness sometimes ...



Ques: You mean go to bed in darkness?

Ans: Yea ... as a matter of fact ... . sam ... we had ... I remember we had times when ... you know, we had bells ringing for church and for schools? Well, bells couldn't ring ... No, they had to cease all bell ringing ... yea ... and the only time that bell ring it was when we had a black-out.... it was some suspicion-suspicion of enemy invasion, then all the houses had was to be in darkness ... no lights, and when that bell goes, all lights had to be out ... and that was the only time we had bells, you know - no bells for church none for school, you know ... they cease all bell ringing, I remember as much as that[7].

Though a typical juvenile recall, it nevertheless reflects that going through the motions of taking precautions, brought the War 'home' to these people. Mr. Graham, the following interviewee, was 16 years old at the time to which he refers:-

Ques: Can you remember anything ... about the War?

Ans: Is one thing I remember ... is when . di Germans sen over a plane ... over Jamaica ....

Ques: Really! I didn't know that!

Ans: Yeah ... an it come so high in . di air . dat nobody on . di . groun ever hear a . soun of it ...

Ques: So what happened?

Ans: . Yu know . dat wireless up by Mannings Hill ... it's there up to now .... Di wireless . dat go up in . di air... . dat was de one . dat ketch . di . soun ... and register it to . des down dere ... an they phone away to New Castle ... and deh sen up . di . likkle plane . des up in . di air ... an when . des go up deh, . des fin' a German woman ... she alone in it ... an . des bring har down ... bring har right down.

Ques: Really! A Woman was in the plane?

Ans: A woman pilot ... only she alone ... an . afta she come down, she . seh she didn't know she was ovva Jamaica ... otherwise it (the bomb) would drop ... but she . navva know ... she deh so high . dat she . navva know .. (laugh). An . des bring har down anyway, an put har in detention camp[8].

Unfortunately, I have not been able to discover whether such an incident occurred or the nature of its explanation. This story reveals, however, that for Jamaicans, the War was very much theirs - albeit not by choice or dead. This fear, together with the severe shortages of food and other basic items, undoubtedly contributed to their decisions about whether to sign up or not. Despite the other reasons, however, the majority of those who volunteered to go to Britain and America, saw it as a means of improving themselves economically and otherwise. A large number of these recruits were not previously involved in the Armed Services, but were civilians who had to be trained before they were sent to England. Many of the previously unemployed and under-employed amongst them considered they could do better for themselves if they joined the recruits. It should also be borne in mind that the recruits had been promised land at the end of their service - though for the majority, this promise was never kept and the issue became a bouncing ball between the governments of the West Indies and Britain as to whose responsibility it was to fulfill the obligation. Several of these recruits were the first to return to England after demobilisation - frustrated by this broken promise and their inability to secure adequate employment. Some were able to stay on in England at the end of the War to learn a trade or improve the one they came with. Others were able to go on to Universities, Colleges, or receive 'on the job training' in certain factories.

While in Jamaica recently it was stressed by one of these recruits that many of the local 'civil engineers in the Island had received their training in England where they had served during the War. Prior to this, the top echelons of the engineering sector in the country were all foreign expatriates. It is not inconceivable that many of the young people who volunteered to work in Britain during the War, did so calculatingly, in the hope of fulfilling their ambitions to obtain a skill or higher

education. Even today in most countries, many young people still regard the Armed Forces as one of the avenues for obtaining these things. In the West Indian societies of the late 1930s and 1940s, higher education - except by way of a few scholarships - were things the poor man could hardly hope for. It is no wonder, then, that many who got the chance, grasped it in Britain and improved their education, brushed up old skills as well as learnt new ones, as opportunities presented themselves. Despite these achievements of the War Recruits to Britain, it is generally believed that the the 'discovery of Britain, as an immigrant receiving country was the most significant outcome for under-developed, enforced labour ejecting colonial countries. It is also significant that, M. M. Manley, as Prime Minister and Minister of Development in 1960, emphasised the contribution of the War recruits in terms of their effect on the employment level in the country, rather than patriotic service to Britain or Jamaica for that matter. Manley stated that:-

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939 came a substantial amount of relief from the heavy pressure of unemployment. About 10,000 men volunteered for the Services and of these about 7,000 went overseas mainly into the Royal Air Force.

War Volunteers contributed to the economy by firstly, effecting a reduction in the unemployment level. Secondly, their remittances - both in money and goods were valuable to individual recipients, while on a macro level, it was a much needed source of foreign currency<sup>10</sup>.

#### Familiarity bred de-mystification

Many of the recruits were employed in ammunitions and other high priority sectors especially in the northern regions of Britain. Unlike those who were employed at the military bases, coal mines and areas, close to industrial centres like Birmingham, they were able to familiarise themselves with every-day life in England more fully because they were in regular contact with civilians. The

recruits received union regulated wages and participated in some of the positive working conditions of local unionised British workers. On returning home, they could relate to friends and relations, their experiences in Britain and importantly, they could inform people about job availability. They would have been acquainted with the fact that because of Britain's need for labour many refugees were being encouraged to stay and help in the reconstruction programme. Demobilisation of West Indians from England was still taking place years after the War ended. In 1948 - three years after the War - a troop-ship was just preparing to leave England with 200 demobbed Jamaicans aboard. These men were, therefore in the country long enough to be conversant with the often heated debates which took place in Parliament regarding the country's dire need for labour. Several M.P.'s pleaded for a change in the Law with regards to Alien immigration, to allow easier flow of people into the country. As British subjects, therefore, the demobbed West Indians did not really perceive themselves experiencing problems in relation to obtaining employment - especially if, as many writers and indeed War Recruits have claimed - the racism which was unleashed against them during the 1950s and later years - was cloaked during the War. They must have felt that there was employment for themselves and anyone from home who wanted to go and work in the UK.

Another way in which the returning ex-servicemen helped to orientate their fellow-men into regarding Britain as an immigration destination, is through their tales about personal contacts with the whites. The fact that many of them for the first time, worked alongside, instead of subordinate to white people, naturally helped to break down the mystique which had been built up in the colonies about Britain and white people in general. Many people in the West Indies had never envisioned a white man doing manual work. Though several years after the servicemen's initiation, the following reaction of Mr. Ware on his way

to England in 1885, is undoubtedly representative of theirs the first time they saw a white manual worker. It is significant to note that this interviewee was then 36 years old and had spent a total of 3 years on the tobacco farms in Connecticut. Obviously, the conditions of farm-work contract had totally separated him from white American manual workers, consequently, he exclaimed:-

At Portugal we spent all day there and I think we pull out the following morning ... There is where I see lots of changes ... white men pushing hand carts and pulling hand cart ... bare feet ... with the foot-heel crack .. like cow hoof... back home!

Ques: And how did people react to that?

Ans: Oh we just got to ... we just got to look ... we + navva realise things were like that! ... we was shock! And we see the white girls, bare feet, walking, bagging . yu pennies and all ... We . navva see nothing like that in all my life!

Though relatively small in numbers, the War recruits were instrumental in helping to break down the mystique surrounding Britain and, acting as 'agents of diffusion' in many ways. They were thus, the pioneers of West Indian/UK migration. In stressing the role of a similar group in Sweden, Petersen<sup>[10]</sup> wrote that 'the significance of this earliest movement was not in its size, ... but in the example it set....By sending home letters, and publicising their experiences in other ways, as well as helping to finance the passage of relatives and peers later on, they made emigration to the Metropolis a realisable feat. Possibly the most important role played by such pioneering groups is that they set in motion a movement, the growth of which 'once it was well begun, was semi-automatic; so long as there were people to emigrate, the principal cause of emigration was previous emigration. Other circumstances operated as deterrents or incentives, but always within the central attitudinal framework'<sup>[11]</sup>.

These Recruits seemed to have been less effective in educating people about racism in Britain, because, undoubtedly they experienced it in various forms. Mr. Marks suggests that in the Industrial Centres of Liverpool, Manchester and Cosmopolitan London, people were more used to black people and therefore, on the rare occasions when he travelled to these areas, he had, what he calls 'a nice time'. He had been stationed in Wiltshire along with other West Indians, Canadians and English soldiers. The following is an extract of his encounters with racial prejudice:-

As West Indians when we came here first ... I will never forget that ... the people ... we was all marching up you see, and going towards Malkham Camp and about three or four old ladies asked us if we were prisoners of war! But I put it down to a lot of ignorance because there was .. the flasher on the shoulder ... to tell you where they (soldiers) from.

Ques: So you think the people ... did not know that they had West Indians there fighting?

Ans: They did not know. Not to my experience because we had a hard time down there ... they never use to coloured and even when you get your pass on weekends and you go out ... we go out together ... it's got to be the very old people who would not ... those on the sticks. You are a stranger into a place and if you ask for directions before you'd get shown .... they would run away from you! Oh yes, ah not telling you no lies.

Ques: But how did you feel?

Ans: Well, you feel lost because ... I'll give you an instance four of us went into ... a Public House and we never use to the system of ... you know in Jamaica you could .. buy a bottle of rum and so much of us drink it? ... We went up to the barman and we asked for ... we said 'can we have a bottle of rum please? ... The man behind the bar like he ... he wouldn't even take the money, he was scared stiff! We just had to give it a pass and say let's give it a pass and .. try the next place and see what would happen .... but as you go along you find that it never improve.

We couldn't understand why they acted that way because we thought these people knowing about the West Indies ... as we been taught about England ... all the coal fields and things ... all day long we've been hearing about coal fields in school and the different counties in England, and when I came here and found that the majority of the people at the time don't even know where the West Indies is

I'm telling you, it was very tough and we got to break barrier down, just by going out night after night until people get use to us.

Leisure times were simply further occasions for reinforcing the 'strangeness and unwelcome presence of those early black 'labour presence in this country. Because, according to Mr. Marks:-

We use to go to dances in the village because its country (rural) place you know ... and when we go there we would see a lot of girls sitting down there ... English girls, young girls, you know, and if you go and ask one for a dance you would ask all night 'May I have this dance please?' 'Oh no, oh no, we can't dance.' We can't dance they say ... and the next minute that you turn your back she would be dancing with her own partner or some other. Ah said, this is ridiculous! These people must think you come from bush! I'm telling you it wasn't very easy ... had a hard time.

Mole Soyinka<sup>[12]</sup>, though writing of urban Marmersmith, expresses most poignantly, the experience related above, and its effects on the immigrant.

#### THE IMMIGRANT

Knowing  
(Though he will deny it)  
That this equation must be sought  
Not in any woman's arms  
But in the cream-laid  
De-Odo-ro-noad limbs  
Of the native girl herself,  
He scans the gaudy bulbs  
(For the fiftieth time)  
Of dancing Marmersmith Palace.  
Then, desperately  
(Although his swagger belies it)  
He tries his manhood  
On the triteness of -

'May I ...?'  
 And waits upon the languor of  
 Her bored appraisal.  
 They would have paired each other  
 To an even point  
 (Even though her stare confounds it)  
 Her gown, fashion wise  
 but body foolish,  
 Beggars his flashy  
 Incredible tie.  
 Her face exchanges  
 Vulgarly  
 For his uncouthness.  
 And the plumb of their twin minds  
 Reads Nil.  
 And yet her answer, given negative,  
 Was barbed with  
 (Albeit ill-fitting) contempt.  
 Without  
 Even the usual palliative  
 False-bottom smile.  
 Her eyes had said,  
 'You? Not at any price!'  
 He felt the wound grow septic  
 (Hard though he tried to close it)  
 His fingers twitched  
 And toyed with the idea,  
 The knife that waited on the slight,  
 On the sudden nerve that would join her face  
 To scars identical  
 With what he felt inside.  
 The blade remained  
 In the sweat-filled pocket.  
 He ran a gauntlet of milling couples  
 And they all seemed  
 To know  
 To jeer at his defeat.  
 He knew now the fatality  
 Of his black, flattened nose,  
 - Not at any price? -  
 The fingers shift  
 From blood  
 To feel the folded  
 Shrewish savings of his marital post.  
 His little brain seeks  
 Factual negation of her estimate  
 Seeks  
 Quick revenge  
 Lusts for the act  
 Of degradation of her sex and race.  
 Failing to find  
 A difference in the street-lamp faces  
 (He had sought the very best)  
 He makes his choice at random  
 Haggles somewhat at the price,  
 Then follows her, to pass  
 The night  
 In reciprocal humiliation.



Naturally, one would wish to uphold the rights of individuals to associate with whom they will. Likewise, one is fully conscious of the possible accusations of male chauvinism implicit in the writer's premeditated response. Nevertheless, the above has been used to emphasise the strong passions which displays of racist behaviour can stir in recipients. In the same way that the dancing girl had a right not to be physically abused for declining the writer's offer, he too had a right not to be psychologically abused by her, in responding to his request.

So aggrieved did these recruits feel about their treatment in England and, according to Mr. Marks, there was 'a big trouble' when the Norwegian ship in which they returned, reached Jamaica. According to him:-

Being as the lads was that roughly treated up here (UK), they said they going to have it the other way when they land in Jamaica.... I'm telling you what I know! ... So when they get to find out they (were) going to start a riot on the boat the captain turn the boat back and .... couldn't come into Kingston because a lot of them would' not have got disembarked .. they did want to jump the boat and go right to their home.

It is almost inconceivable that these returning soldiers would not have informed people about their adverse experiences in England due to their status as 'immigrants' (even 'alien' to the ignorant), as well as their black skins. Whether those listening, would have been able to interpret the meanings, however, was a different thing, especially when, unlike Black Americans, the majority of Afro-Caribbean people had never themselves experienced overt racism - if only for the simple reason that the majority of them did not come into direct contact with white people. Mr. Downs was in Jamaica at the time the Recruits returned and he later travelled to England to seek employment. I asked him

whether he was aware of racism before he came here and he said no, he then told the following story, which I will attempt to relate:

He was walking down town one day when he saw a large crowd of people and they were making so much noise as they laughed, that he went to see what was going on. In the middle of the crowd, was a soldier who had obviously recently returned from England. The soldier told them how English people drank many cups of hot tea each day.

At that, the people laughed loudly, because for someone living in a tropical country as Jamaica, the thought of people drinking several cups of hot tea was certainly something they found hilarious.

The soldier then went on to talk about how people asked him if he had a tail and whether people in his country lived in trees. At this, said the informant, people almost fell about with laughter!

When asked whether he did not feel a sense of unease about this and didn't they interpret this to be racist, he said they did not understand. Like the many cups of tea, this was put down to the quaintness of the English and ignorance. As will be seen later the majority of West Indians did not associate racism with Britain, they were not prepared for it in the way they would have been, had they gone to the US, and seen racism in practice and importantly, they did not know how to deal with it when they encountered it. . Afterall, even as descendants of slave, few Jamaicans know much about the details of slave degradations of their forefathers. And even those who mixed with Black Americans as they worked as contract workers, appear not to have understood the full effects of racism on the individual. They often dismiss Black American refusal to fight back against white suppression in the fields as simply another display of cowardice and 'stupidness' on the part of their US counterparts. Numerous stories are told about Black Americans being kicked by white bosses and instead of hitting back, they walk away. This was usually expressed as something that is incomprehensible.

Earlier, it was mentioned that the War Recruits were amongst the first people from the Caribbean to travel to England in search of work. If the above informant, Mr. Marks, is representative of most of these returnees who, according to him, believed they had had things hard while in Britain, then their actions in returning must have been driven by a desire for self improvement which they undoubtedly perceived, could not have been achieved in their own country. Undoubtedly, some of them on their return had great plans for utilising the skills they had learnt and of being able to make some kind of living from the land they were promised in recognition for their services. These plans were to be frustrated due to government procrastination in performing their duties. On the 5th December, 1949, the matter was discussed in the British Parliament when a Mr. Driberg asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies<sup>[13]</sup> if he was aware that:-

Jamaica is more backward than other Islands of the West Indies in announcing plans for the resettlement of ex-Servicemen and if, in view of the fact that the majority of West Indian Servicemen are from Jamaica and that some are not going home, he will cause such an announcement to be expedited.

Mr. George Hall, Secretary of State for the Colonies stated that he was informed:-

...that the Government of Jamaica will make a full announcement of its plans in the course of the next few weeks. The delay in announcing details is mainly due to the necessity for keeping proposals for settling ex-Servicemen on the land in line with the Government's general land settlement policy which is under review.<sup>[14]</sup>

If, however, the experience of the ex-Servicemen of the First World War was an example, then the majority of contemporary ex-Servicemen would have been, and were, left thoroughly frustrated. As late as July, 1947, General Sir

George Jeffreys asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he was aware:-

..... that Jamaican ex-Servicemen of the first World War are dissatisfied with their treatment by previous Jamaican Governments, that these men were promised land for cultivation and that they would be cared for by the Imperial Government... That the land they were actually given is little better than a stony desert; and whether he will cause their complaints to be looked into and their grievances to be redressed.<sup>113</sup>

Three months after being de-mobilised in Jamaica, Mr. Marks was back in England. He had received £30 from the Jamaican Government, but no land, nor did many others, although, according to him, some got as much as 20 acres and houses built on their plots of land. He contacted a Lawyer, but then decided to return to the UK. When asked why he decided to come back to England, bearing in mind the dissatisfaction he had previously experienced, he replied:-

.... because you mostly in the camp ... among soldiers, you don't know what civvi street life is like ... 'cause it is entirely different ... and you don't know what you going to put up with in civvi street ... you would never know what most of the people (are) like.

When I came back for the second time ... I did plan to stay a while not permanently because all my intention was to work in this country and then go to America.. join some of my folks over there.

The returning de-mobilised War recruits in 1948 were closely followed by what might be termed 'peer group' recruits. As time progressed, the migration of dependants and single women swelled the ever increasing numbers of emigrants from the West Indies to Britain. These movements, as well as being indicators of economic deprivations in their homelands, can be seen as an eventual psychological acceptance of Britain as an 'area for immigration', and their right as British Colonials and later Commonwealth citizens, to exploit this for their own gains. The great momentum with which this

movement developed, forced Louise Bennett, Jamaica's most renowned folk poet and comedienne to put pen to paper:-

#### Colonisation in Reverse

Wat a joyful news, Miss Mattie,  
I feel like aa heart . . guinea bura'  
Jamaica people colonisin  
England in reverse.

By de hundred, by de t'ousen  
From country and from town,  
By de ship-load, by de plane load  
Jamaica is England boun.

Dem a-pour out o' Jamaica,  
Everybody futura plan  
Is fe get a big-time job  
An settle inde mother lan.

What a ielan! What a people!  
Man an woman, old an young  
Juss pack . . dem bag an baggage  
An tun history upside dung!

Some people don't like travel,  
But fe show . . dem loyalty

Dem all a-open up cheap-fare to-England  
agency<sup>(18)</sup>.

#### Conclusion

From the above, therefore, it seems that the notion of a 'dynamic pull' closely regulating the flow of migrants from Jamaica, must be viewed more critically. Unlike inanimate beings, the actions of humans cannot be analyzed as responses to simple 'stop/go' instructions (in the absence of coercion or psychological conditioning). Such analyses often fail to grasp a very important element in the movement of human resources - that is, the role of individual perception in migration movements. These are usually well established in people's minds long before actual movements take place. The 'opening' up of Britain was for economic reasons, but the

actual height of West Indian immigration was less for economic reasons than the earlier waves. The demand for labour, having broken down the entry barrier in the first place, did not control the rate of flow - especially during the peak periods. Despite the apparent correlation between the flow of information about employment vacancies and the actual levels of emigration from Jamaica, this cannot be regarded as a direct indication of how people responded to information about job availability in Britain. Moreover, analyses which emphasize a twin relationship between unemployment and decreased immigration fail to indicate the fact that the use of immigrant labour is an essential factor in Metropolitan economic growth and that in an economic down-turn, this type of labour is often essential in achieving a low capital/labour ratio. According to Castells, 'Immigrant labour is ... a fundamental element in the economic structure of European capitalism and not simply an extra source of labor in conditions of rapid growth'. He also stressed that:-

... though differences in levels of development explain the causes of emigration, immigration into the advanced countries is governed by such more deep-seated reasons, which cannot be reduced simply to the manpower needs of the economy.. While it is true that the employment situation is immediately reflected in increases and decreases in the level of immigration (thus, for example, the economic recession in Germany in 1967 resulted in the departure of a large number of immigrants), it is also the case that the long-term trend is continued growth in immigrant labour. (17)

Castells and Koseck emphasize a fact which according to them, 'is particularly disturbing,' that is, 'the appearance over the long term (1950-1970) of a parallel increase between unemployment and immigration in most of the countries, with the possible exception of Germany' (18)

In the Jamaican/UK migration, it is no doubt true that hadn't the British government imposed legal barriers to entry, immigrants from Jamaica as well as many other peripheral countries, would still come here, though the volume may have declined - possibly drastically, because of alternative countries of immigration by the mid 1960s. Further, underlying the movements into Britain before the 1962 Immigration Act, there was an undoubted growing dissatisfaction with the UK

This feeling was enhanced by reports about unrealised ambitions as well as the unexpected displays of racism against them. Reactions to these, though relatively slow, was nevertheless, profound, consequently, today there is a new situation whereby England appears to be last on the emigration preference list, when compared to the US, Canada and The Bahamas. Since Independence in 1962, relationships between the West Indies and the US has been continually strengthened, while their ties with Britain have been loosening. This has been even more emphasized with Britain's entry to the E.E.C., and the consequent falling-off of trade between the UK and her former colonies. The close interaction with the US, is not purely an economic one, but involves political and cultural interaction also. North American television programmes and news media amounts to a virtual cultural colonisation in Jamaica. This increased interaction and information between the two areas have undoubtedly contributed to a reconstruction of the mental maps of the people of Jamaica, and as mentioned before, the 'States' now takes the peak position which the UK formerly held.

Pragmatism is an important factor in immigrants' decisions regarding migration destination today. The older generations who came to England were filled with notions of 'the Motherland' and a belief in Britain's egalitarianism. According to Sutton and Makiesky:-

The history of the West Indies has given support to the notion of England as protector against their own white elites. In Barbados, this belief triggered off the 'Federation Riots' of 1878 (Hamilton 1956), and continuous conflict between the colonial office and the Barbadian plantocracy was viewed by the masses as further proof of its validity; the enemies of my enemies are my friends.<sup>[15]</sup>

Even as the inter-war years witnessed an upsurge in nationalism in several Colonial territories, there still lingered a strong belief in Britain as 'protector'. Prior to the migrations to Britain, West Indians had felt protected even against the racism of white Americans, as they worked in the US As 'King George Niggers' (as white Americans termed them), they were spared the most dehumanising aspects of racism practised against Black Americans. Knowledge of and interaction with this negative aspect of American society had, inadvertently ensured emigration to England when West Indians perceived their 'Mother Country' as being opened to them.

While economic gains were the underlying rationale for many migrations, yet with West Indians - as possibly is the case with most migrants - the concern was 'Will I get a job?' Rather than 'How much money can I make?' The knowledge of this possibility in England was not based on any real experience, yet their interaction with British middle class administrators and preachers had left a perception that this must be so - jobs must be available in England.

What they certainly were not prepared for, however, were the displays of racial prejudice against them when they arrived in England. Yes, some had experienced this both from local whites and mixed descendants as well as seen and experienced prejudice through personal or relayed cases, but according to Sutton and Makiesky, such treatment was regarded as a 'perversion of the true Metropolitan culture' [20]. Relationships between the majority of West Indians who had had contacts with



British people would have been one of patronage and deference. In such a relationship, it was difficult for any but the most sophisticated West Indians to detect racism and all their education about Britain was contrary to this fact. Consequently, it was not surprising that nothing but the highest ideals were attributed to Britain in this area. Likewise, despite the possibility of earning a lot of money in the States, it was no great wonder that West Indian emigration switched to England in 1948 onwards.

Today, however, as far as most Jamaicans both in England and at home are concerned - pragmatism as opposed to nostalgia or Commonwealth relationship, determines any immigration to the UK. The continued dehumanising treatment which British Embassy staff reportedly metes out in so-called 'New Commonwealth' countries is a continuing witness to the complete dismantling of historical relationship.

As mentioned, previously, the 'slick' public relations exercise which the American Embassy engages in is effective. For those less sophisticated members of the Jamaican society, it appears that America really does care about and wishes to help them. While the more discerning of them appreciate the attempt at civil treatment, while acknowledging that it's simply a cosmetic exercise, which could be used to increase America's bid for political domination in the region. None of the migrants going to the States are ignorant about the historical significance of racism in that country's development. The possibility of making 'nuff' money in America has always been common knowledge in the Caribbean, but well known also, was the fact that as a black person in the US, 'If . yu waan good, . yu nose . affa run'. To quote more from Sutton & Makiesky:-

Economic expectations are complemented by the recognition of less attractive features of United States society. Violence and danger,uggings and murder, are graphically portrayed in the media and elaborated by returned migrants. More important, though, is the knowledge of American racism which has an important place in (West Indians) perception of United States society. They are conscious that the white majority has brutally treated its own black minority.[21]

Armed with this knowledge, and the impulse to seek a perceived 'better life' abroad, Jamaicans continue to enter the States in as many numbers as the Immigration quotas and illegal entries permit. Most comparative studies to date, indicate that they have always done better financially than their counterparts who emigrated to the UK To the extent that they are believed by Black Americans to be too acquisitive. Lennox Raphael sums up the feelings of Black Americans as he quotes an informant:-

Listen .. West Indians are a gas. As soon as a white man moves out they fight to replace him. Man they're too damn acquisitive.

Raphael further commented:-

The Afro-West Indian has somewhat misguidedly, always felt that he was a free man in the West Indies. Today, in the US, he has numbed himself into believing that he is as free as any white American[22]

Undoubtedly, prior information which helped to form individual perceptions has played a vital role in the adjustment of Afro- Caribbean people in America. As mentioned previously, they knew about some of the most degrading forms of racism there. At the same time, however many had entered the country in controlled movements, whether as farm workers, domestic servants, or the twilight world of illegal immigrants, they were often shielded from the most overt racism which ordinary day to day contact would have occasioned. At the same time, they were assured of regular payment, which meant that they were relatively better off when compared to what they

would have got back home; and many were unaware of the degree of exploitation which their presence as cheap labour occasioned, not only of themselves but more importantly of Black Americans.

It is also a fact that many Afro-Caribbean people had a false sense of 'freedom'. Again, the absence of real overt racism in their day to day encounters with white people, helped to reinforce this view. It is true that many 'light' skinned people would often 'pop show', and be very offensive at times, but in the final analysis their behaviour could be dismissed as simply 'poppy show' (puppet show), to be suffered or ignored as these would and (they believed), once they got to Britain; because, as was stressed earlier, such behaviour even if it was experienced in the Caribbean, was believed to be alien to the British way of life.

## Endnotes - Chapter 4

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## CHAPTER 5

## A REVIEW OF MIGRANTS' LABOUR

### CHARACTERISTICS

#### Introduction

Often, research on labour migrants emphasises employment characteristics with reference to their immediate relevance to the receiving Core economy. Thus a preoccupation of British and American labour history during their industrialising periods focus on the forging of pre-industrial labour into a malleable production factor, capable of meeting the needs of industrialisation.

Sydney Pollard has portrayed most vividly the virtual reconstruction of individuals culture which went into the making of 'industrial worker'. According to Pollard:-

a society of peasants, craftsmen, and versatile labourers became a society of modern industrial worker. There was more to overcome, than the change of employment or the new rhythms of work; there was a whole new culture to be absorbed and an old one to be traduced and spurned, there were new surroundings, often in a different part of the country, new relations with employers, and new uncertainties of livelihood, new friends and neighbours, new marriage patterns and behaviour patterns of children within the family and without. [1]

Various forms of sanctions became widely used tools both in England and the US in moulding labourers to fit in with industrialisation and factory requirements.

This image of the early industrial worker in both the US and UK was projected into the literature about the required ideal characteristics of post 1945 migrant labourers into

Core economies. Thus, topics such as appropriateness of skills, levels of productivity, potentials for acceptability and integration are all looked at from the agenda of the dominant indigenous groups.

Almost all the work of post World War II migrant labourers to Britain start from the premise that the majority came from basically pre-modern, if not pre-industrial societies, into the advanced industrial society of the UK. Implicit in this is the belief that they could, therefore, not justifiably have been accorded status for the "pre-modern" skills they may have brought with them. Thus, it was alleged by Griffiths:-

The skilled immigrant worker (where-ever s/he was from) is at a disadvantage vis-a-vis his British counterpart, from the circumstance that the nature and conditions of work in British factories are often in many ways different from those to which he is accustomed at home. [2]

This implies illogically that imported skills are necessarily redundant because the new type and conditions of work are different. On a more representative note, Norman Tiptaft in his article, "Birmingham's Colour Problem" (Birmingham Post 12.11.1952), stressed that:-

Many are classed as skilled craftsmen in their own homes, but when they get here they find their skill often not up to the British standard, and are consequently forced to work as labourers. Some would have no objection to that if there were prospects of improvement, and attend courses to fit themselves for better jobs. But when they have done so, although there is supposedly no colour bar, they do find discrimination. In numerous Birmingham factories, I am informed, an indifferent white workman will get a chance before a skilled coloured man [3].

From this perspective too, Senior and Manley in response to a Jamaican government commission suggested that:-

A moment's analysis of the difference between the highly developed economy of Great Britain and the "under-developed" economy of the West Indian Islands provides the key to the difficulty ... it is exceedingly difficult to transfer at the same level from the one economy to the other the product of either general education, specific vocational training, apprenticeship, or industrial experience<sup>[1]</sup>.

Alongside these must be contrasted the article which appeared in the Daily Gleaner of Monday August 8th, 1957 which lamented:-

During the last few years there has been a steady flow of mechanics and artisans leaving Jamaica to go to England. As a result, sugar estates, the bauxite companies and other undertakings have found themselves seriously short of trained maintenance men.

... the training facilities for craftsmen in the island are at present, inadequate to replace the losses which have taken place and the maintenance of machinery and equipment throughout the island is suffering.

... it is not exaggerating to say that the position is extremely grave. Even with unlimited facilities for apprenticeship, it would not be possible to produce sufficient trained men in the immediate future because apprentices take five years to become trained artisans<sup>[5]</sup>.

Unfortunately the limitations of this study will not allow a comparative analysis of training Course contents for skilled factory workers both in Britain and in Jamaica. It is however inconceivable that apprenticeships as those referred to above, some lasting five years, would not have been sufficient to earn Jamaican trainees a place amongst the many grades and varieties of skilled workers in the UK

Senior and Manley pointed out that many skilled artisans had left their tools at home, or encountered problems due to the difference in equipment in the UK compared to those used

back home. Thus, even simple tasks became problematic because often they found that:-

measurement was done with micrometers instead of with calipers and they were expected to achieve the much finer tolerances indicated by the former<sup>[6]</sup>.

Despite these obvious problems, however, this study is particularly interested in investigating firstly, the level of skills transferability which took place - whether immediately, into the exact or related areas of employment, or later, after up-dating training. Secondly, the writer is keen to discover the extent to which prior non-formal expertise/skills (i.e. not obtained through given training), were utilised in the receiving country.

While this is not meant to be an apology for Afro-Caribbean under-achievement in the British economy, The writer contends, that such generalisations about the inadequateness of these migrants, have themselves been based on 'truths, half-truths and damn lies.' The following extract, taken from an interview by a B.B.C. Reporter and the Manager of a local cinema in Birmingham during 1964, emphasises this point very clearly:-

I am the Assistant Manager of a large cinema in the Midlands, and I'm extremely reluctant to employ coloured people because, frankly, they're so damn prejudiced themselves. I find that before I ask a coloured member of the staff to do something, I have to consider very carefully whether or not that coloured person will think I'm picking on them. This makes life very difficult for me.

Sometimes I find I'm placed in an embarrassing situation by people writing to me and it would appear that the person who has written to me is a white person, and I find that when they arrive they are coloured, and therefore unsuitable for the purpose I have in mind.



The manager was interviewed twenty years later in 1984 and a tape of his earlier comment was played to him. This is what he had to say:-

Did I really say that! I don't ... I don't really know why I said that. I wouldn't say I was particularly proud of that reply now. We only had one coloured lad on the staff while I was at the Odeon in New Street, and I can't recall any particular difficulty with the lad. So it would probably seem to me that I was the one who had the hang-up.

I think that possibly I'm a little more honest with myself now about views on racial matters, but I must say that I cannot speak with a coloured person without being conscious of the fact that I am speaking to a coloured person ... and .. or that I am speaking to a person of a race which, perhaps ... I don't think a great deal of. Why it should be so, I cannot imagine! It's quite illogical. I can't justify it, and I can't explain it in any way at all ... It's probably deep seated and it's probably something which goes back into childhood<sup>[7]</sup>.

While the above belated honesty is to be applauded, one is forced to suggest that such fabrications are not 'Atypical', nor are they reserved for black people only. Similar comments have been documented about Eastern European, Jewish and Irish Immigrants both to the UK and USA, during their industrialising period. Thus, according to Melvyn Dubofsky:-

When American-born elites thought ... especially of recent immigrants, they often projected onto workers images of untamed brutishness and potential violence. Lacking the well developed superego of the good bourgeois citizen. The immigrant worker, it was thought, easily succumbed to alcohol, sex, crime, and violence<sup>[8]</sup>.

The commentator concluded, however, that this was 'perhaps' a projection of middle class anxieties and one might add prejudice onto the target group.

It is important too, to understand how the immigrants were able to circumvent barriers and carve out a meaningful existence for themselves. This understanding is best achieved by listening to those for whom it was a life experience. As suggested by Dubofsky:-

... the immigrant ghettos of the past, despite their share of crime, chaos, and disease, seemed to breed more hope than despair, more success than abject failure..... maintained a wide variety of customary cultural institutions and a substantial sense of community, factors that abetted social and occupational mobility and that rendered the immigrant ghetto a way station on the road to successful accommodation with American society. Among the immigrant workers, old and new, family and kinship networks, ethnic societies, saloons, and music halls preserved their traditions and provided a culture that sustained their existence in an industrialising society(1).

The following chapters should afford scrutiny of expertise importation and their retention and transformations within their cultural and cross-cultural relationships.

#### Imported Labour Characteristics

The majority of male respondents represented in the study were from small artisan and trader groups. For artisans such as shoemakers, tailors, carpenters and cabinet makers, apprenticeship of approximately three years appeared to have been a normal pre-requisite. Like most apprenticeships, these seemed to have been designed for exploitation of workers and to safeguard existing artisans from competition. As a result from the information proffered by respondents who fall in this category, it appears that the 'journeyman' (as they termed the person to whom they were apprenticed) used them as a cheap source of labour during the period of training. Some respondents were paid a small sum as wages or pocket money after an initial period of initiation into the job to the stage when it was felt they could be trusted

to perform given tasks adequately and not become a liability through 'spoiling the work'. At the very beginning, however, the trainees received no monetary reimbursement for his time and in several cases, had to pay the trainer a fee.

As many artisans had no other form of labour, but the trainees, they tended to phase or restrict the training to ensure that trainees would not leave them too early to set up their own businesses when not only might this lead to competition from his/her own trainees, it would also mean the loss of possibly a good worker. Of course, it should be remembered that many of these 'exploited' later become 'exploiters', as they struggled to survive in the often 'hand to mouth' world of the Third World artisan.

Irrespective of levels of success, Tables 5.2 and 5.3 indicate that most respondents reported that they were gainfully employed whether working for themselves or for some other employer prior to emigration:-

TABLE 3.2

## ACTUAL EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO EMIGRATION

## MALE RESPONDENTS

(MMHDI)

Respondents	Status of Employment	Types of Activities prior to Emigration
1	I	Motor Vehicle mechanic
2	F	Agriculturalist
3	F	Farming, Cabinet maker, Stone Mason
4	F	Farming, Butchering, Masonry
5	F	Farming
6	F	Farmer, Barber
7	F & F	Farmer, Baker
8	F & F	Painting and Pipefitting
9	I	Veterinary Assistant, cultivating
10	F	Tailoring
11	F	Cultivating
12	MF	Motor & Mech. Elec. Eng
13	F	Cabinet Making
14	F	Farming and Roof Shingle making
15	F	Farming, Cabinet Making, Carpentry
16	F	Cook (Chinese food), Ship's hand, cultivating
17	F	Farming, (growing salad tomatoes)
18	F	Tailoring and Cultivating
19	F	Carpentry
20	F	Carpentry
21	I	Cultivating and Baking
22	F	Shoemaking
23	F	Farming
24	F	House painting, general labouring, cultivating

KEY: I - Independent Employer    F - Partly Self Emp.  
 F - Fully Self Employed    MF - Military Force

Source: 1984 Interview Data (n = 24)

TABLE 1.3

## ACTUAL EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO EMIGRATION

## FEMALE RESPONDENTS

(NMID)

Respondents	Status of Employment	Types of Activities
1	I	School teaching
2	I	Domestic Work
3	F	Teaching (Kindergarten)
4	F	Sewing
5	F	Dressmaking, embroidery, organ playing
6	F	Dressmaking, cultivating
7	F	Sewing, Baking
8		Secretarial trained but did no paid work.
9	F	Migglering, Farming & Sewing
10	F & F	Buying & Selling(Migglering)
11	I	Worked in Bar & Grocery Shop
12	F & F	Sewing, Migglering & Kindergarten teacher.
13	I	Midwifery
14	I	Manageress in Bar
15	-	Did no paid work in Jamaica
16	-	" " "
17	F	Grocery Shop
18	I	Sewing (in shirt factory)
19	F	Migglering, Manufacturing & Selling of clothing and paper bags.
20	-	No waged work
21	F	Seamstress

Key : I - Independent Employer    F - Partly Self Employed  
       F - Fully Self Employed

Source : 1984 Interview Data - N = 21

An examination of Table 5.3 above indicates that all the male respondents said they were employed prior to emigration. As many as 37.5% (9) male respondents were fully self employed, the same percentage i.e. 37.5% were partly self employed, which means that part of their wages were earned by working with an employer - whether private or public - and part was earned by exploiting their own skills, independent of any employer; this would involve the workers dividing their days/weeks so that they might work for an employer for part of the day, week or year and for themselves at other times. This is different to the 8% (2) respondents who were intermittently partly self-employed and fully self-employed. Only 12.5% (3) had only worked for an independent employer and never attempted any kind of entrepreneurial activities for themselves.

Table 5.3 shows that only 14.28% (3) Of the female respondents did no waged work in Jamaica, while 24% (5) said they were fully self-employed. The majority, however, 29% (6), worked for an independent employer, 19% (4) were partly self employed, this means that some of their skills were used at specific times of the day/week etc to earn money independent of any employer. 10% (2) of respondents worked intermittently as partly and fully self-employed.

From the above it appears that only 4% of total respondents did not earn a living - either by working for a private employer or for themselves. It was, therefore, not unemployment, which forced many to emigrate. Significantly, of the total male and female respondents, 51% said they came to 'obtain more money' while only 24% said they came 'to seek employment'.

Prior Migration and Industrial Initiation

In the case of Jamaica, Table 5.4 below gives some emphasis to the thesis that labour migration of these as well as other Caribbean peoples had been a long established tradition before the movement to Britain commenced.

TABLE 5.4

Estimated Net Emigration 1891-1921

Period	To USA.	Panama	Cuba	Other	Total
1891-1891	16,000	17,000	-	10,000	43,000
1891-1911	-	26,000	-	-	26,000
1911-1921	30,000	2,000	22,000	23,000	77,000
Total:	46,000	45,000	22,000	33,000	146,000

Source: The West Indian Comes to England : Editor -  
S.K. Ruck (1960 - Pgs. 5) [10]

Although the World Depression of the late 1920's and 30's caused a return movement to the Caribbean, War involvement meant that, approximately 100,000 went to the USA. in the period 1943-46, as industrial and agricultural workers engaged in short term contracts.[11]

The above, together with Tables 5.5 and 5.6, gives an indication of the volume and geographical dispersal of Afro-Caribbean labour migration.

Table 5.5

PRIOR EMIGRATION OF RESPONDENTS, THEIR RELATIONS & FRIENDSF E M A L E S

Respondents	Country of immigration	Migrant/Visitor
1	UK and US	Relations
2	-	No prior emigration
3	UK and US	Relations
4	UK	Relations
5	US (Farm contract)	Relations
6	US, Canada, and British Honduras	Relations
7	US & UK	Relations
8	US	Relations
9	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
10	UK, US & Cuba	Relations
11	UK	Relations
12	UK & Canada (later)	Relations
13	Panama	Mother
14	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
15	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
16	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
17	Italy	Informant's Father as student there
18 uncle	US & Nigeria	Informant's Aunt &
19	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
20	-	No knowledge of prior emigration
21	-	No knowledge of prior emigration

Source : West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Table 5.5 reveals that of the total female respondents, none of them had visited another country prior to their emigration to the UK. However approximately 62% claimed that



close relations of theirs had emigrated in search of work. Like their male counterparts, the quest for work seemed to have spanned several continents - i.e. The Americas, Europe and Africa.

Though these female respondents could not boast of prior industrial initiation, the information above at least demonstrates that like the majority of Caribbean families, labour migration was a long established tradition. Moreover, as 'word-of-mouth' is such a powerful medium of communication in many developing countries, it can be assumed that through relayed information, some knowledge of the processes involved in industrialisation, including a different work ethic would no doubt have been conveyed to them by family members; thus in a removed way, the strangeness of an advanced industrial society - would have at least been introduced though not broken down.

The following Table - 5.6, shows that, unlike female respondents in WHID, several of the male respondents, had actually been labour migrants themselves and had worked in factories (whether it was to do with agricultural commodities such as tobacco or through their War Manpower involvement), and had done work which is more akin to the type of factory work they would be required to do in the UK as migrant workers, though, in some instances, the actual commodity would have been different.

TABLE 2.5

PRIOR EMIGRATION OF RESPONDENTS, THEIR FAMILIES & FRIENDS

## M A L E S

Respondents	Country	Migrant/Visitor
1	US, UK Costa Rica	Friends Informant's Mother and informant on a visit.
2	UK US	Relations Informant as farm contract labourer.
3	US & UK	Relations
4	-	No prior emigration
5	Cuba	Informant's relations
6	US & UK	Informant's relations
7	US	Informant
9	UK (1914 recruit) US	Informant's relations Informant & relations
10	-	No prior emigration
11	UK & US	Informant's relations
12	UK & Canada US	Informant's relations Informant
13	US & Cuba UK	Informant's G' father Informant as War Recruit
14	UK & Panama	Informant's father
15		
16	US & Cuba	Informant's relations
17	China	Informant's father
18	China, US & UK	Informant
19	-	No prior emigration
20	US & Panama	Informant's mother and informant visited
21	Mayaguano (Bahamas)	Informant
22	-	No prior emigration
23	US	Informant as farm labourer
24	U. S.	Relations
25	-	Tape lost
	Panama	Grandfather

Source : West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Approximately 420 (10) of all male respondents had been to another country prior to their UK immigration. Of this group all had been actual labour migrants themselves. Of the total male respondents, only 160 (4) had no knowledge of prior labour emigration in their families, whereas 790 (19) reported that they or closely related members of their families had emigrated previously in search of work. Geographically their search for work spanned several continents namely The Americas, Europe and Asia. The majority were employed on agricultural contracts, but they were, by no means limited to un-industrialised work experiences. Two of the following case studies reveal that although some people were recruited for the Farm Workers Scheme, many were able to work in factories outside of peak agricultural seasons. This was certainly so with many who were recruited during and immediately after the War. This fact is emphasised by Case Studies (S.[i] & S.[ii]) below. Not only do they indicate that these imported labourers were involved in contemporary relevant jobs such as artillery manufacturing, they were also developing useful industrial skills which were imported to the UK economy when they eventually turned to Britain in the Post War II reconstruction.

Prior to the emergence of War, industrial experience of a non-agricultural nature would usually be obtained by those who had actually entered North America as non-contracted workers having obtained entry visas. These, compared to Contract labourers would have been relatively small. However, the labour shortage occasioned in agriculture and industry - both in the US and UK meant that large numbers of people were recruited specifically for the factories. Even those who were recruited for farm work, were able to obtain industrial experience as several of the case studies reveal.

Preamble to Case Studies

The following five Case Studies have been selected because they represent the main categories of migrant workers in the WMID. Scrutiny of Figure 5.1 reveals the employment categories of both male and female respondents. Male respondents fall into three broad categories (see Figs. 5.1):-

- (i) Artisans & Skilled labourers
- (ii) General labourers
- (iii) Farmers & farm labourers

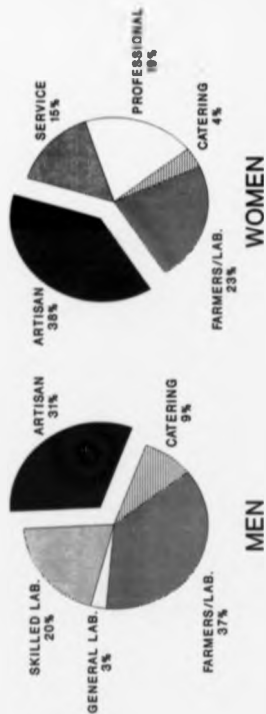
Of the females who worked, their employment activities are more disparate than the males, but can be broadly categorised into four groups:-

- (i) Artisans
- (ii) Service industries/Activities
- (iii) Professional/Clerical
- (iv) Farming

Davidson outlines a contemporary and broader classification of employment activities of early Jamaican immigrants.

Fig. : 5 (1)

## EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION AT EMIGRATION



SOURCE: West Midlands Interview Data

**Table 5.7**  
**Jamaica: Employment Experience**

Category	Numbers		Per cent	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
1. Working on own account				
Agriculture, forestry,				
Fishing	52	7	28	4
Clothing .. .. .	12	35	6	20
Domestic .. .. .	-	45	-	25
Other Trades .. .. .	20	4	11	2
2. Working for wages .. .. .	66	40	36	22
3. Unemployed .. .. .	35	48	19	27
Total .. .. .	185	179	100	100

Source: Sample Survey, Jamaica : Davidson - West Indian Migrants 1962<sup>(12)</sup>

It is significant to note from the above that of those respondents who worked, the majority i.e., 56% were self employed while 44% worked for wages. Of his respondents who worked for wages, Davidson classified their industrial activities as indicated in Figure 5.2 below.

In order of descendancy, manufacturing, building and contracting, and agriculture, forestry, fishing were significant employing sectors of male respondents, while Service sectors such as catering and hotel were the largest female employing sectors, followed by manufacturing and distribution. The large percentage involved in the service sector is, to a certain extent, a reflection of the degree of rural labour ejection and urbanisation - all features of a modern economy, but this is juxtaposed alongside a

# INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION - WAGE EARNERS



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Fig. 15 (2)

SOURCE: Davison's Sample Survey/Jamaica

significant percentage (28%) of peasant proprietors, a feature usually associated with pre-modern societies.

Of those respondents who claimed to have been self-employed at the time of his survey Davidson refused to classify them in the occupations they claimed they were involved in prior to emigration, this is because, according to him:-

A man would claim to be a 'painter' or a 'mechanic' simply because, in some remote past, he held a brush or spanner in his hand or even watched someone else handling these implements. Without some simple trade testing scheme the attempt to register occupation simply on the work of the respondent seems a somewhat futile exercise when it is borne in mind that for the sake of social prestige, to say nothing of future employment prospects, it is a human reaction to exaggerate attained skill<sup>[13]</sup>.

Retrospective quests such as these are open to serious criticisms, especially in relation to respondents' bias and representative validity. The most that is intended is to contextualise the debate by acquainting readers with the varied experiential backgrounds from which many of these labour migrants came and to look at the extent and process of skills transference and acquisition by this small group of non-professional labour migrants. Further, the very in-depth nature of the interviews carried out, requiring respondents to explain in detail the exact nature of their work prior to emigration, has been an effective way of evaluating the validity of the information given.

As we are privileged therefore to be informed by these respondents, it is hoped that sensitive scrutiny will enable a clearer understanding of the experiential background and characteristics of this particular, and often maligned - wave of immigrants. Such a perspective dignifies immigrants in a setting where the needs of a capitalist imploding



economy often discards, without recognition, any asset save those immediately relevant to its needs.

Employment characteristics prior to Emigration.

Case Study : (5.14) - Trained Agriculturist

Name:	Shireland Bates
Sex:	Male
Age:	60 yrs
Parish of Origin:	St. Catherine
Marital Status:	Married
Age at Marriage:	39
No. of children	Born in Jamaica: 1
	Born in UK 4
Formal Education:	Elementary, Secondary, Further
Year of UK immigration:	1955

Family background

Mr. Bates, the second of six children, grew up with his parents, brothers and sisters in St. Catherine. He said that while he was growing up, no one in his home worked for wages - though his elder brother left home to go and work in Kingston. His father was a small farmer as well as a carpenter, and these two areas provided money and food for the family. He cultivated on two plots of land, the smaller was connected to their home and was about 1 acre, the other much larger piece was 'family land' and this is where most of the farming was done. Crops such as coffee, cocoa, bananas, yams and other vegetables were grown, while at the same time they kept pigs, cows, and poultry. These he stressed would be sold by his mother at the market, and would be used to sustain the family, as well as subsidize

his brother while he was being trained as a mechanic. (his pay being very low during his period of training).

Of his father's carpentry work, informant said:-

Well ... two or three of them, they used to take on contracts to build houses or something like that.

they could build (a house from beginning to end) .. but it's not him alone you see, it's three or four of them, a group of them.

He also said that his father did cabinet making (furniture making) only for the family.

#### Personal Work Experience

Informant went to Elementary School until he was seventeen years old. During the latter part of his time at school, he became a 'super-numerary teacher' - after studying for the pupil teacher examination. He then went to Dint Hill Practical Training Centre where he was trained in theory and practice of agriculture and animal husbandry.

His first employment was in America, when, as he stressed:-

R ... We went on a farm-worker's scheme (in 1944) - in those days, during the War, America people within the working age had to be in the force and they were short of labour and they contacted Jamaica and as a result they negotiated a contract whereas Jamaicans used to go to America and help out on farms. So that is how I went.

I worked on the farm ... pick apple, potato, tomato .... people use to come to America and go back home after six months. They came to stay (in

the US). When the War was very fierce, they also wanted people to work in factories.

- I. You (are) saying that at one time people would go back home (but) by the time you were there, you could stay?
- R. You could stay and be contracted out of the farm-work into, they used to call it the Manpower Service - so then you go into the factories and I used to work into a TNT factory where they used to make explosives for bombs - I used to work in there and after the War finished I was working in a spaghetti and macaroni factory.

- I. How long did you stay in America?
- R. Three years and seven months.... I was working where they box the TNT. They used to make the TNT ... like half a mile up and then it used to come down the line in boxes and we used to fold the boxes.

The informant did not elaborate about his work in the spaghetti factory. From the above, however, it is clear that he gained production line industrial experience prior to his UK immigration.

I asked him whether he was able to use agriculture to make money while he was in Jamaica and he replied that on his return to the Island:-

- R. At one stage I used to work with the Department of Agriculture. It was just after the 1981 hurricane, they had a farm recovery scheme and I used to be the head - we used to go around and used to contour, you know, like on the hillside where the land was being eroded and needed contours to preserve the soil, the topsoil..... We plant things like coffee, coconuts, citrus and we taught the people how to prune ... prune coffee and so on.

Informant worked in this area for about three years, then, according to him:-

I left and I went to Kingston and was working with the Department of Statistics and we did different surveys - when they were converting the frequency from a 40 to 60 cycle we used to go around and inspect the different gadgets to see where to build up the cycle from 40 to 60 or to know whether you had to use a transformer to build up the power ... We did surveys, agricultural surveys ... we did a cost of living survey ... I was an enumerator that goes out and gets all information. (he worked here for two years)

And then .... I was working with a Canadian company in Clarendon - a place they call Gold Mine; they were prospecting for copper and iron and I worked about a year with them. ... That was around 1956-7, just before I came here.

He believed he was underemployed in Jamaica because:-

.... when I used to work with the Department of Statistics, government used to allocate so much money for a certain surveying project, and probably you work on that project for three months, then for a month or so you're unemployed and then probably a month after another grant was made for a different project and you go and take training in that particular project and then you go out and work it.

I could manage when I was working, but ... it was difficult, say if you were working for three months and for another month or six weeks you don't work, that money would have to go to subsidise the time that you wasn't working.

I asked informant why he decided to emigrate and he replied:-

Well, as I said, in Jamaica in those days it was unemployment and ... I'm a young man and I got the urge to travel and it was a kind of craze going on

that everyone wanted to go to America .... it was purely economic.

I never planned to come here and, but my case is a very peculiar one because I used to work with statistics and one evening I came back from country and I saw a letter from Chin Yee's to say that they got a letter from my sister and I was to come down and see them, so I said I not goin' anywhere. Well, I was persuaded, I think it was my girl friend who's a little wiser, she said, well go and see what they want, so I went down there the Saturday and they said we have a letter from your sister to contact you because she would like you to come to England.

When they contacted her she wrote me - I said well, why the hell didn't you tell me that you was writing to these people. She said oh, you wouldn't come you know and I'm lonely, I'm up here on my own - I don't know anybody here and all that, so that's how I came to this country. I never planned it really.

He thought, however, that on coming to England he would be in a better financial position, and at the same time further his education by getting a certificate in the field of agriculture and could go back and use that expertise for the betterment of the country as a whole. He started a correspondence course in England, but could not get practical agricultural work, despite trying, to complement the theory.

On coming to England he tried to obtain work through the Labour Exchange, and relates this experience as follows:-

I had a great experience when I went to deal with the Exchange. They gave me a call and I had my certificate from school and I also had a recommendation from the Department of Statistics and so on, so they said, oh well, this will suit you, and it was a dispatch clerk job, so I went to this place and they said that I was to come back on the Monday morning because the manager wasn't there. But where I was living at Indian House,

they had a public phone in the house, so I phoned the Monday morning and they said yes, the manager's back. So I went down and when I went down now, the Receptionist said to me, "I'm afraid the manager is not here" - so that is my first taste of this racist thing. And I said, "Well I just phoned about twenty minutes ago, 'cause I was living nearly down (the road),

So she said, "Hold on Sir, hold on, I'll go and see", and she went in and came back and she said "I'm afraid the job is taken." So that is the first time I met upon this kind of thing.

His first job was obtained by him turning up at British Railways and asking whether they had a vacancy. Here, he said, he received another surprise because he stressed:-

When I filled the forms out and do that, the station master or the recruiting officer, whatever it was ... said "But oh, you can write ... and you can write properly!"

He commenced work as a Porter, with a starting pay of £7/15- (£7.75p) per week, whereas, he stated, "I was getting £8.00p per week in Jamaica, plus travelling and board-and-lodge wherever I go." I questioned Mr. Bates about his feelings doing this type of work, and he replied:-

I felt it was degrading to me from the type of jobs that I have done before ... I used to work shifts, six-to-two and two-to-twelve.

He stayed on his first job for one year, then applied for a job to work on the buses. Respondent stressed that when his employers realised that he wanted to leave, they offered to promote him to become a shunter, but he was determined to leave.

He worked as a bus driver on public transport for fourteen years, after which he worked for a well-known British Motor Manufacturer for nine years, and where he received promotion from storeman to store-keeper. At the time of interview for this study he was employed as a Manager for a Black Community project. As he was then 60 years old, one can assume that he will retire in this area of work.

Mr. Bates feels that apart from driving, he has not learnt any new skills since he has lived in the UK. Even of his promotion he has this to say:-

I had to apply for it, but it was given to me as a token I think..... Because I was shop steward, and .... because that is my nature, I always will stand up and fight, upset the cart of injustices or whatever. And the two previous people that had got that job got six weeks to three months training.

The one that I took the job from he went to the doctor and he was told that he was sick and... had to discontinue the work. I applied for the job and the Friday evening, about quarter past four I went to wash up and I was coming back and the Superintendent call me and he said, eight people have applied for this job, but I'm going to give it to you, because I think that you're the best qualified ... and that kind of thing, you know. So he gave me the job and I said OK. I said "when shall I start?", and he said Monday morning. Without any training!

I think he gave me the job out of fear, but it made me more determined to carry on and then about three weeks after this he called me and he says "I'm surprised!". I said "Why are you surprised?" He said "well, I didn't know that you'd pick the job up so quick". But I think he wanted to use me in a respect to say he gave me the job, I failed it, then if another black person asked for the job, they would say well, they want to work this job but they're not capable to do it, so that made me more determined to do the job properly in the end.... you've got a lot of racism that goes on

I asked Mr Bates to share with me his thoughts about the personal benefits, or otherwise of his emigration to Britain this, said he:-

... (is) a difficult question - beneficial - I am more aware of a racist society and the haves and have nots... I've learned more about it than I previously knew...

Now, I also feel if I were in Jamaica, I'd be better off today - because since I left, opportunities open in Jamaica... but it's no use crying over spilt milk, I've gained some experience here ... I've gained a lot of experience by coming to this country, so when I go home back, and I talk, I know I'm talking of experience rather than I just read in a book or something like that, so on that hand I have gained that kind of experience.

In assessing respondents labour characteristics, one is made acutely aware of several facts. Firstly, his prior work experience both clerical and administrative, together with his industrial initiation in the USA meant that even as an ordinary factory worker he was an extraordinary asset. Secondly, Informant had been trained at a level equivalent to technical school/college training, and from his own as well as the Employment Exchange's perception, he could have coped effectively with clerical/administrative work. Despite holding certificates to verify his capabilities, however, he had to wait for 15 years before obtaining a Store-keeper's job. Even here, the 'sweetness' of this victory was tainted by his perception that the Management's decision to offer him promotion without job specific training, was intended to ensure his failure. While this could be interpreted as paranoid reactions, the rules of 'positive action' and equity militates against such practices. It could have led to self-fulfilling prophecies, in that the stress and strain of trying to perform a job well, without suitable training and experience, could itself



result in under-performance; and, in a superficial way this could be used to justify reluctance to award promotions.

It took 24 years as an employee in Britain before he obtained work, which although different from his initial requirement, was nevertheless, more in line with what he believed matched his qualifications and ability. Though of managerial status, and of tremendous community value, the promotion is marginalised by nature of the organisation for which he works. This, unfortunately is symptomatic of the situation on a macro level. Members of black minority groups are forced to obtain promotion and the ensuing social and psychological benefits through marginal or low prestige employment avenues.

Case Study : (S.111) - Farmer

Name:	Robert Greg
Sex:	Male
Age:	67 yrs.
Parish of Origin:	St. Andrew
Marital Status:	Married
Yrs. of Marriage:	50
No. of children:	Born in Jamaica: 7 " " U.K.: 0
Formal Education:	Elementary
Year of UK Immigration:	1955

Family background

Mr. Gregg's mother died in 1923, when he was eight years old. He was brought up as an only child by a paternal Aunt, whose children had grown up and left home. There were three adults in the house, his Aunt, her niece and his Grandmother. Informant said that none of the adults worked for wages, as they lived off the 'plantation' which his grandfather left.

R. No skills .... we till the soil ... but I was proud of it you know ... it make me happy ... because I eat a living out of it. I just doan skim di earth yu si ... I doan skim it ....

I. Can you describe your work there as a farmer?

R. Oh ... ah plant everything ... everything dat mi hands catched on ... den ah come bak an ah have mi own lan (not family lan) again, a just plant stable crop ... navva to go down ... keep on, you know, breadfruit, coconut ... yu know, all those tings .. coffea, ... wah doan go down .. ah have those yearly.

I. And what did you do with the goods?

R. We tak dem to di market ... di wife tak dem to di market.

I. Did you keep animals as well?

R. Yes, cows.

I. And what did you do with the cows?

R. Ah sell dem when they come up ... ah sell di milk an if I got a bull calf .... ah sell the bull calf, but ah keep the haifer to breed again and get more.

I. You said you sold the produce from the farm. Did you also sell to local people in your district or did it all go to the market?

R. It always go to di market.

I. Would you say it was a profitable business?

R. Yes ... not knowing no big money you know ... Dat time a two and six pence piece ... sometimes a pound would come in .... but we navva squander it, ah always put it up.

I. Did you always have money coming in?

R. Yes ... it might be small, but it always coming in .. Every week something come in, you si .. and mark yu, the children dem eat and drink out of it as well as di wife have to feed herself and ... yu know.

I. I suppose you used the food from your land for your own food, rather than buy.

He only went to Elementary School and of his further education he stressed that his father, "take up with another woman, and dat's it ... it stop right there" He indicated that he was skipped from fourth class to sixth class, where he stayed for three years. Implicit in this, is the assumption that he was educationally able, but could go no further, as progress would have depended on his family's ability and desire to spend for him to receive further training at secondary level.

#### Personal Work Experience

Mr. Gregg was a farmer and an interesting factor to note is the wide range of enterprise in which he and other peasant farmers were involved. On leaving school at the age of 14 yrs, informant said "ah navva lif straw .. ah jus run roun wid dose girls ... (laugh)" However, at the age of 24 yrs, when his first child was born, he started to work on his family land. Undoubtedly, his aunty was financially able to keep him until he himself 'became a family man' and assumed more responsibility. According to him:

I was di las one in di family. Di ole man got five of us, four boys and one girl. Now I was di las one, an I have di whole fourteen acres of lan fi me ownself ... do as I like with, because they lef ... some a dem go weh tun sailor, some was in town working on tram car ... yu know, conductor ... well it was I alone at home.

The following sheds some light on the different ways in which he used the land:-

I. What skills did you have in Jamaica?

- R. Yes ... yes .. we doan have to buy none ... all-an-all wi buy is fish ... Sometimes wi kill a pig, you know, wi sell it round an wi keep a piece for ourself. Sometimes wi sell a goat ... wi keep the fifth part for ourself.
- I. Did you have to do the farming on your own, or did you have help?
- R. Well, di only help dat we got, you si, wi work a pardner business ... about eight of us together, and di either of us are farmers. I work for yu dis week - all seven of us come an work for yu dis week ... If yu have yu lan to chap down, we chap it down ... if yu have yu hills to dig, we dig it ... an yu give us breakfue in di days an wi work ... Yu get your turn dis week .. nex week I get my turn, you come ovva ... an dat's di way wi get on. We len each other days. An wi ask women to come in an help us pick peas an so on, yu si.
- I. So peas picking was mainly women's work?
- R. Dat's right ... yes.
- I. What other things were particularly women's work?
- R. Cow peas and gungo picking, and deh mak di market.
- I. Did you ever have some of the men going to the market?
- R. Not none of dem that work with us ... but I know of other men that do that. Their wife stay at home and they go an mak di market. Well I doan know if is proud some of us was too proud why wi doan, but wi look at dat as women's job ... (laugh).
- I. About how many hours a day would you put in?
- R. Oh God ... luv, sometimes is a roun-an-roun clock - right roun di clock, especially when I about in cane.
- I. You had cane as well?
- R. Yes ... when deh start to grind di cane from dis morning, wi doan finish until all two ... three days.
- I. So you make your own sugar .. and who did you sell it to?

R. Wi sell it to di market ... sis pence a quart, four-pence-he-penny a quart, nine pence a quart ... luv it was cheap, yu si ... but a little something coming in your hand in di week, yu si. Yu sell sixteen quart a sugar for five shillin. It's not good those days ... but to tell yu the truth dahling, it's better than now. Yu getting in good wages now ... when yu go to di shop, yu sorry to si what yu get for yu money dat yu span. Jus a little bit of something, yu can just hold it in yu han. And firs time yu span five shilling, yu have a load on yu head.

Mr. Greg's story above appears to be similar to thousands of immigrants from the Caribbean, and we have seen that although by his own admission, things were not always easy, nevertheless, he was certainly not destitute. In fact, it could be argued that in terms of monetary remuneration, he was probably no worse than peasant farmers or artisans in this country and other so called 'developed countries'. He certainly had satisfaction and a sense of pride from his work, and these would rarely be accorded in the receiving country, because of the extensive division of labour and the monotony of repetitive work. In addition, as an immigrant, any sense of pride which nostalgia might have given, is tainted because often, neither the actual skills, the degree of transferability, nor potential for learning which previous experience afforded, is taken into account by the receiving country in determining the type of work immigrants should do.

Like many of his compatriots, Mr. Greg grasped the opportunity to go on Contract to America, as this was the way in which many working class people and peasant farmers were able to earn a living or accumulate additional funds. This informant was able to get on two Contract Schemes, the first in 1945 in the War Manpower Scheme and the second in

1947, as a farm contract worker. Of his first trip to the States, he said:-

R. I go to America in di War Year ... 1945 .. di same year di War ovva ... New Jersey an di Camp was Rearton Arsenal. I span six months dere. It was contract we go up on. If deh tek yu in, in Farm Work or War Manpower, yu doan have no authority to renew it. If di farmers they want yu, they have to ask, an they keep yu, save di trouble from come back home. But if yu come back home, an they want more man, they sen for yu direct. If you is not a good worker ... they doan want yu.... so therefore when yu go dere yu haffe do yu bes, yu see ... that should in case they want anybody else..

I. You were there for six months .. what kind of things were you doing?

R. We straighten out di shells dem ... we sterilise dem first .... Di shells weh they tek so kill di Germans dem yu see. When they come back deh full a blood and pieces of flesh and dem raw .. Oh Lord! I go in di War manpower ... not farming.

I. So you were in a factory?

R. Yes .. right .. weh deh mak bomb .... an load dem. We work at a place deh call Breakdown (?) ... and we got a foundry dere weh deh run along belt ... keep rolling .. men up dere, putting on the empty shells dem dat come back from di War... an yu got some chairs near by and some lights ovva it ...looking down ... I have a scar right here ... right now I can show it yu. Afte the shell come down on di belt, I go in dat furnace and sterilise, you know, fire it going through and if one live one pass you here .... because some a dem, when it drop dem they doan fire .. it still life! It dangerous for you back dere catching dem when deh coming out ... dat's why I get this... It coulda kill me.

Di American tell me dat some people, di whole a dem tummy blow out .. so now, deh give us strict charge, whenever we bring the wheelbarrow and put it underneath to catch the shell dat coming through, we had to stand dis side and watch it until it full. When it full you press a button an stop it, an yu go and draw it out ... Well I nevva know, you see, I stan dere and hold di handle ready to pull it out and one a dem explode ... right through mi han you know!

Afta dat, when we go in di factory now and start to ... mak them and load dem, you wouldn't like to si the things dat mak a bomb! ..... Down to fish bones, ... bottles, gravel ... stone ... an dem bones you see, sometimes you see those trucks here going away with some bones, when dem tek from de meat shop dem? Dem doan throw away yu know, they put everything in them ... the grassbottle ... and a wick .... They have a wick go right down through it, and they wad dema things round the wick go down wid gunpowder you know! ... some kinna explosion business, so now is this now when it drop now you see .. those things dat fly out, dig out yu belly out a you man!

I. How many hours a day did you have to put in?

R. From 7.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

I. And after that, it was your own time? What sort of things did you do?

R. We look a little back door deal afterwards you see. We go with nex farmer for the res of the evening, you see. So now, they pay us same time.

I. Were you supposed to do that?

R. We not supposed to, but they doan stop us you see, we go and we pick pears an apples an if they have any tomatoes to pick we pick them, tobaccoo too.

Mr. Greg went back to farming on his return to Jamaica, but was offered the chance to return to the US in 1947, on the Farm Labourers contract scheme. On his second trip he went to Hartford, Connecticut, where he did only farm work.

Informant's very graphic explanation of his work in the US as a factory worker is informative - though puzzling in parts. For example, "where? (one is forced to ask), did those shells with blood and flesh come from? As no fighting actually took place on American soil, one is forced to conclude that these must have been transported from the battle front - but where? This conundrum cannot be solved here, neither is it germane to the main thesis, which is, that many Afro-Caribbean labour migrants to Britain had received industrial training in the USA. prior to entering

Britain. Like Mr. Bates, Mr. Orag from his own account, had gained experience of working on a conveyor belt/production line work, worked in a furnace environment - with all its unpleasant side effects, and through bitter reality had come to appreciate the relevance of industrial safety, and had been forced to work under the discipline of time-and-motion regulation. Undoubtedly, these experiences would have been advantageous in his transition from peasant to industrial proletarian, and should have been calculated as one of the attributes he, like thousands of Afro-Caribbean peoples brought with them as migrant labourers to Britain.

In response to my query about why he decided to migrate to Britain, informant stressed that he didn't come to stay, only to raise some money to return home and expand his farming. Mr. Orag's house had been badly damaged in the 1951 Storm, and he was forced to borrow money from the Jamaican government to repair the damage. He had remained uneasy that it had been necessary to surrender his land title as security. This concern, therefore, had forced him to migrate to England for a short while - he hoped - just enough to earn the money to repay his debt. Of this matter he had this to say:-

After dis country open up, I seh to the wife ... look here .. death is a sure man, an if I dead an dis money doan pay back, the government gwine tek away me lan.... so I gwine shrink off a portion of dis money (to pay his fare) .. an so I did ...

An I come ovva ... an as I come ovva, di firs money ah start to work ... I get £12.00 a week, and every week, dahling let mi tell yu, ah save £10.00 ... every week out of £12.00, just only to pay back dat money... An every ten weeks I sen £100.00 a Jamaica, an endure dat hardness here ... jus only to pay it off, because I have seven children there an di wife, an if government turn dem out, they have no where to go.



He said he didn't sell anything when he came, because he intended to return and carry on his farming. He believed it would have taken him "just five years". Unfortunately, while he was in England, he found out that his wife had no less than two children for another man, this has resulted in the break-up of his marriage. He was able, however to send for all his children bar one, a son who he claims is 'not right'. [14]

In speaking of his employment in the UK, he said he found the first job, with help from the people who lived in his house. This job was measuring timber. He also worked in foundries, bakeries and several other places - moving at one time to Liverpool, where he stayed for about three months, in an attempt to obtain a wage above £12.00. Unfortunately, all the places where he was fortunate to obtain work - both in Birmingham and Liverpool, only offered him £12.00 as a basic wage. The longest period of time spent on one job was six years in the bakery.

Mr. Greg attempted to return to Jamaica for good in 1964, but on his way to Southampton, the van in which he was travelling overturned in Oxford, and he dislocated his hip. This accident and the consequent delayed departure, made him decide to stay.

He has not been on any training schemes since his sojourn in England, but believes that he has obtained new working skills, especially baking. This was obtained by watching and questioning the dough-mixer at Bradford's baker, consequently, when the dough-mixer went on holiday he volunteered to mix the dough as they did not have a relief dough-mixer. After that every time they needed a relief

worker in this capacity he was asked to do it but, as he stressed:-

The dough-mixer money is more than di man dat work on the plant .... when my pay day come up, I just get di same money, so I seh to them ... "Why do I have to get di same money, and I'm doing the dough-mixing?"

He said to me "You're not a skilled man"

I said to him seh, 'well why tek mi an do a skilled job?' There was did other bakery up at Moseley .. I pack dat one up, an I go there an I demands mi money, because I'm a perfect dough mixer ... an I got mi money there ... an I work there for four years ... is there I lef from was going home.

He has learnt other skills, but believed he has not mastered any like the baking. He stressed, however, that having learnt plating, he was able to use this skill to earn money in America when he went on holiday and became a worker in the 'alternative economy'. Mr. Greg seemed to have been further privileged to become a charge-hand in the last bakery in which he worked.

He feels that the experience he has gained - particularly getting to know the English people, how they lived and relate to people, how they manipulate people etc., has been useful to him. Nevertheless, he regrets coming to England, especially now that he believes farmers are able to demand better prices for their produce.

Case Study (S. (111)) - Skilled Labourer

Name:	G.W. Mulma
Sex:	Male
Age:	64 yrs.
D.o.b.	5.5.1926
Parish of Origin:	St. Anna
Marital Status:	Married
Age at Marriage:	33 yrs. (UK)
No. of children:	Born in Jamaica: 3
	Born in UK: 0
Formal Education:	Elementary

Family Background

Mr. Mulma, the eldest of three children, his brother and sister were brought up by his Grandmother because his parents died when he was very young. His grandmother was the only adult in the household who worked for wages to keep them all, until he, the informant started to work at the age of 14 yrs. His grandmother worked at the Public Health Department, though he's not quite sure what she did, he thinks it would either have had to be clerical work or cleaning.

Work Experience

He learnt painting and pipefitting - though he did not undergo a period of apprenticeship, instead, he worked with a foreman plumber ... who was with the 'War Department'. He stayed with this Foreman for four years learning the trade. After this, he launched out on his own, because, he said he could charge his own price ... so 'yu get a bit more'. At that time, he said he could take on the job to paint a whole house and he believed it was harder than now, because then you had to mix your own paint to 'catch yu colours'. He could do any pipe-fitting work, and at times he also did labouring.

The informant worked for 'Shallco' for a while, but for most of the time he worked for himself. Despite this he hesitated to define himself as 'fully self-employed' at any time while he was in Jamaica because, said he:-

Sometimes yu get a house to paint ... ,  
sometimes it may be weeks or months before you get  
another job. During dat time, yu crack at  
anything.

When Mr. Hulme was asked how much money he received when he first started working he replied:-

I was learning with a bloke ..... and when I could  
master the job (painting) and he could sen me  
anywhere to finish off dat job, it would be 2/6d a  
day..... I was very capable dat time ... and I get  
2/6 a day!

With the plumbing and the pipefitting, at dat time  
I was earning about five pounds a week. That was  
big money, I could buy a suit out of that... and  
have about three pounds left in mi pocket. A  
drill suit was just six pence a yard or shilling a  
yard for the cloth.... you give it to a tailor.

Although this informant was fully conscious of the advantages to be gained from working for oneself, nevertheless, the erratic nature of employment periods made this choice often impractical. In many cases, individuals like Mr. Hulme would be dependent on sub-contracted work and this was often unreliable; though when he did obtain such work, he seemed quite satisfied with the monetary remuneration. The instability of employment, however meant that, from time to time he had to "have a crack at anything" and this state of never knowing whether one will obtain work or not, undoubtedly had some influence in his decision to go abroad - both on the farm worker's scheme - or eventually to migrate to England.

Mr. Hulme had travelled to the US on the farm-workers scheme, prior to immigrating to the UK. Of that experience he commented:

To tell you something, after the War ended I don't spend much time in Jamaica, I'm abroad all the while.

'43 I was in America, and even in the 50's I was in America. When the War ended it was ... '48, I just went home back.... I got to travel during the War to America .... Sub-marine and all that got to guide us and take us back up there. We didn't aware of it. Is when we catch in deep Ocean than we see what is what and we start to cry and give in and seh ... mi brother and sista won't know what happen to me you know!

When we was there (in the US) we got to do our own washing ... now that was very strange to me, you got to wash your own clothes and all like that. Yu come home and yu meals are cooked .... they got chef an man who work ... they cook your food an all like dat, there's people who look after your bath place and everything like that .... everything got to be spot clean, you know. As I say ... I enjoy it after a while ... automatically you get used to it. In America now ... going out and meeting people, it was different from back home, you see ... Now when I went to America, yu see men walking amongst men wid his gun on his side, or have men going to work and he got his gun protaking them to work! I seh well dat is funny, yu doan see it in our country!

Mr. Hulme spoke about his experience as a contracted tobacco farm worker:-

Yu got to plant the tobacco .... (and) During the winter time you work in the warehouse by turning the tobacco. Dat's where they cook the tobacco ... cure it, so we work in the warehouses. Then when you finish, you go sising it, tek the good one from the bad one ... dat is in the other big factory where all women work, and you got to tek out all the very best tobacco. We were taking out eighteen different grade of tobacco. ... They got different places to put them ... and they mark

from one to eighteen. You got to be sising them and putting them there, you know....

I. Was it a hard job?

R. It is, it cause fa ... 'aya work' ... yu eye got to be good, because dat's where I start wear glasses. You got to move your han fas' ... very fas', an yu got to finish in every hour... is an hour they give yu an yu got to finish five minutes before di hour done, to get yu other load to go on.... Yu must complete it within di hour. Dat's where you earn your money, it's eight hours and you got to do the eight bundles of tobacco fi di day.

Of his immigration to the UK I asked him: "Why did you decide to emigrate?" To this he commented:-

Well, it get in mi blood. Once yu start to travel it seem like is something in yu blood. You can go home now and stop there, six, seven, eight, nine, ten years... as the time come, you do travel again, yu just get and say well ah going certain place, it's that simple. You see, as I say, my travelling to Englan.... When yu read about Englan and the teacher tell yu about Englan, is the Mother lan and all like this, and what Englan ... well I want to know Englan ... and see what Englan is like. So I got to pay mi money to come dat time.

Yu want to gain experience and to earn money. Money is the chief thing why you go abroad... why yu travel really.

Of what relevance, however, is the above information to an understanding of Caribbean labour migration and integration into an advanced capitalist economy as Britain?

The information gleaned from this respondent further corroborates the thesis that those immigrants who had gone to the US on the farm workers/or War Manpower schemes, were initiated, albeit unknowingly, into an industrial work

ethic. For example, although the commodity this respondent worked with was agricultural as opposed to manufactured goods, nevertheless, he worked in a factory, was required to perform under time-and-motion regulations, and by his own admission, had been able to link the fact that the pace at which he worked determined the salary he earned in the long run. By the time he immigrated to the UK, the strangeness of industrial methods of production would have been at least partially eroded. Undoubtedly, therefore, his productivity performance would have been more acceptable to employers, than those immigrants coming from a totally rural background - with no industrial initiation.

Mr. Mulma's travel to America had fully proletarianised him. This does not mean he could or would not return to a dual labour mode in the future. What it meant, however, is that whereas previously he resorted to 'working for someone else' only when he could not find enough employment in his own skill, in the US, he had to work solely for the tobacco farmer/s and at a pace dictated by him/them in a factory setting. Additionally, employment was regular - though for a contracted period; this, however, could enable him to make financial plans for the future. Even though, as he said it "was very strange to me ... to wash your own clothes", and do domestic work such as keeping dormitory 'spot clean', this was initiation for the kind of life he would have to live when as a single man, he eventually came to England and settled in one of the many multi-occupational residences. Importantly too, his prior labour migration to the US had prepared him for life away from home. This

undoubtedly had positive implication as far as psychological readjustment was concerned. Whereas this may not have helped the trauma of 'home sickness', and the adjustment necessary in the US may have been quite different from those in the UK, nevertheless, the informant, and others like him had undoubtedly been enabled to devise coping strategies from his prior experiences which could be applied in the new situation.

Case Study (S.141) - Female Co-Farmer & Miggler

Name:	Iris Ingham
Sex:	Female
Age:	55 yrs
D.O.B:	-
Parish of Origin:	Portland
Marital Status:	Widowed
Years Married:	23 yrs
No. of children:	Born in Jamaica - 0
	" U. K. - 3
Formal Education:	Elementary

Mrs. Ingham, the fourth of five girls grew up with her mother and sisters, as her father died when she was almost 12 years old. She began working for wages at the age of fifteen. She worked for some 'wealthy cousins of hers' doing washing and cooking, for which she only received seventeen and a half pence. She left them after a short while and went to do house-keeping for another family, but here too, she received a very low wage.

At that time three of them in the household worked for wages, herself, her mother and her third sister who did domestic work. Amongst her skills Mrs. Ingham listed dress making, catering, domestic work and these she stressed were



used to make money, while other skills such as mending, ironing, etc were used to perform housewifely chores, as well as non-remunerative jobs to help old people in the District, through the United Friends Club, run by two Americans.

Her mother did sewing, crocheting, and farming, specifically cattle rearing - all of which raised money for the family. According to the informant, they had three milking cows for selling milk to other villagers, - a lot of sheep and goats, consequently she couldn't remember how many, four sows for breeding and re-selling piglets, goats and fowls.

She got married at the age of 25 years of age and then did cultivating with her husband. They had three acres of land which they purchased for themselves, additionally, however, they rented seven acres of land 'from a Indian man who was a head man on the sugar estate', and who had a lot of land. As far as actually contributing to the farming is concerned, Mrs. Ingham was certainly not a passive partner in this husband and wife team. On this ten acres of land they cultivated yams, coconuts, bananas, pawpaw, and a lot of vegetables. These were sold both to local people and in the market in "Central Kingston ... Coronation market." As suggested by her:-

When I went down on Thursday, I doan come up until Saturday evening, because mi husband keep sending down fresh things, so I stop at di hotel or stop wid my friends dem .... den I sell and come up on Saturday Evenings.

As well as assisting with the cultivating, informant's husband worked on the sugar estate doing farm labouring such as cutting cane. In addition to this, she said he also did butchering, though from her account below, the tasks seemed

to have been sub-contracted to three men who cut bananas as well as assisted with the butchering. These people would be paid as the tasks were performed, and they in turn did their own cultivating. Of her husband she indicated:-

He buy animals from other people ... who take it in by trucks or cart, then he get somebody to kill for him while he is at work, and they do di selling for him until he come home about 1.00 O'clock from work.

He killed three times for the week ...(killing) lambs, goats and pigs. He always butcher two big pigs at once, or if it's very big ... butcher one, and two sheep or two goat.

If it was 2/6d a pound for meat, he would buy at di live weight say for a shilling a pound ... so he got to kill it an clean it up, den after weight it up and ... if it weight 100 or 150lb, he have to pay for dat at dat weight. It was most profitable to buy live weight.

After yu buy live weight ... insides, di feet, the head ... all dese belong to you ... yu buy it on di live weight, so yu can't lose.

I asked her whether she would have called herself prosperous while in Jamaica, and whether it was common for people in her district to earn their living by cultivating in the way she and her husband did. To this she replied:-

Yea I was, because I nevva have any children an I could manage to help my family, so ... I doan know why I come here ...

Many people have much more land, and yu can get lan room to rent from other people who have vast amount of land, and even from the government as well, people who own big properties, yu can get lan from dem to rent and do cultivating.

(Rent) dem time ... it was cheap, so yu pay about £1.50 for half year, or yu can cultivate it an share. Di local food, yu doan share, but yu share di banana crops dat yu plant ... with the property owner ... people who own big property, yu rent it

from dem, or yu can pay shilling a year dat time, an what banana come ... yu know it's on share ... yu have to clean it up and take it up an sell it at di wharf .... an if yu take out, say, a hundred stem or fifty stem a banana, yu have twenty-five, and the owner get twenty five stem.

(People) doan mind doing dat, because it keep yu from sitting at home.

In their attempt to improve the standard of farming, she said the government would send around inspectors and those whose fields were of a good cultivating standard, would get "about £15 per acre. In an attempt to gain this money, therefore, she said she would rise early and weed the field and prune bananas until the sun became too hot to work comfortably.

With regards to how many hours per day she had to work, Mrs.

Ingham said:-

I may feel to work all day today, an I doan feel to work tomorrow ... yu si, we work with our own (pace)... (At planting and harvest times).. we go to work very early .... we leave from six O'clock or half past six, an we work until when di sun turn di sun turn to di mountain ... dat's 12.00 O'clock ... or 1.00 O'clock.... den yu cease work dat time because it is very hot.

We saw at nights .... use kerosine oil ... sometime I fell asleep ovva di machine .. di work ketch afire ....(laugh).... could burn di house down! (She took the shade off to enable her to see more clearly).

Mrs. Ingham felt that she was better off in Jamaica than she has been in the UK Although, according to her:-

Our produce ... di English government was buying it for very little money ... if we sell, yu banana has to be very good ... into good order ... before you can sell it at di wharf. An at dat time, it was only 2/6d a bunch ... for a nine han or a twelve han bunch of banana. And one six han bunch of banana was for only five pence what deh call now ... we say shilling .... an di eight han, was for 1/6d.... We navva get any money for our produce!

We have pimento, an we have lemon .... a bag a lemon dat weigh 100 lbs weight, is only eight shilling ... what yu call here 60s ... so it was very poor. An when I came in dis country an I saw banana been selling for 2/6d a pound and when I look at a fourteen han and a twelve han bunch of banana dat we have to sell for five shilling or 4/6d.... it grieve my heart .... I navva know how people could be so wicked!

We have to pay for the helicopter to come in an spray our banana .... about £1.50 an acre,... and we have to keep it clean, pay people to work with us as well, (as well as transport it to the wharf).

Nevertheless, she said she could make between twelve and thirty pounds normally and if the market is bad she could make eight pounds ... that's the least she ever returned home with from the market each week. This she felt compared very favourably with her early wages in England because, as she stressed:-

When I came here ... my flat rate .... at di sewing place ... was only £4.50 .... When I leave dere and start at di hospital, it was only £5.00 flat rate, an I have to go to work for 8.00 O'clock and finish 5.00 in di evening ....!

Case Study : (S.v.) - Artisan

Name:	Alfredo Bann
Sex:	Male
Age:	53 yrs
Parish of Origin:	Westmoreland
Marital Status:	Married
Age at Marriage:	24 years old
No. of Children:	Born in Jamaica: 8
	Born in UK: 1
Formal Education:	Elementary
Year of UK immigration:	1961

Family background

Mr. Bann's parents had eleven children, he being the third of seven boys and four girls. As a very young child he lived with his grandmother, though he eventually went back to his own family when his grandmother remarried - her second husband being English. He suggested that because his grandmother was reasonably well-off, his mother was employed to cook for her and her new family, while 'other servants did other domestic chores.

Mr. Bann said that while he was at home, four people in the household worked for wages. His father was a small stock butcher, which, according to informant, meant that he purchased animals for slaughtering instead of rearing them himself. In addition to this, his father along with other members of the family did cultivating mainly for the family's need, but he or his father would sell vegetables and fruits such as corn, pumpkin, cucumber, melon, and peas at the local market in Anchovy, or the government depot nearby. Of his mother, he said: 'she do domestic work. She's a top class ... chef like. ... She worked with her Mom and she worked with tourist.... Cause Montego Bay have a lot of tourists... everybody want cooks...' His elder brother,

the other person in the house who worked at the time, was a 'jack of all trades. he can do anything... carpenter, mason, tailoring,' as well as helped with the butchering.

#### Work Experience

At the age of fourteen, informant left school to learn the Mason trade, which took about three years during which he said, "it took a good while before we get any money." At the age of seventeen he commenced working at a place called Reading, where his grandmother lived. He did not stay with the latter, however, because, according to him, "I went to some contractors. While he was training he only received 2/6d. each week but when he completed he said his first wage was twelve pounds a week. When he started to work on his own it varied between twenty pounds and over, depending on the exact nature of the job. For example, in explaining how he was able to raise the money for his fare to travel to England he said:-

I was working for myself then, and when I booked my first fare, I think it was £30. I still have the receipts. I didn't know where the rest coming from and I book the date.... Luckily, I was working then for a gentleman by the name of Dr. Smith .... building a summer house for him, then a gentleman come dung and see me doing this work and asked me to come up and do some work for him. It was a tennis lawn, where ... it cracked up and I have to chip it out and then fill it in with white cement and the driveway it was ... it did need some bricks to replace and I do that.

That take me a week and a half, and that was around £200 and odd.... they provide the material and I charge them by the running foot. 2/6d. a running foot for the tennis lawn. I have a young man working with me and my brother, he was learning trade with me at the time.

Mr. Benn stressed that he normally had at least four people working for him. He seemed to have been a very skilled

stone mason, as is evidenced by the two recommendations he showed to the interviewer, the first was from the Managing Director of the Montego Bay Beach Hotel, dated 15th June, 1959. He was foreman mason on this job in construction of the fourth floor of the hotel. According to him, he had about fifty masons working with him at the time. The recommendation concluded: "We would recommend him to any similar position."

The second recommendation was dated 17th March, 1961, from the Manager of the 'Harlequin Hotel', Montego Bay who referred to him as 'an expert craftsman' and recommends him with great pleasure for jobs as a stone mason.

Informant was not able to obtain the exact type of work in England as he did in Jamaica - there the work was more skilled in that he had to cut and dress the stones he needed for building, whereas in England, he worked with ready-made bricks. Further, the division of labour in the building trade, resulted in him being deskilled. In comparing his work as a mason in Jamaica and working in the building trade in England, he said:-

I find they do things different... For instant, if they are casting concrete, they ... just string the line round the edges, and you know, have two little piece of wood there and cast it ... But we don't do it like that... we take the level and clamp it down, and then ... catch the level around the skirting board. Then we put two piece of block ... and have it level, and then you cast your concrete, then you have a next piece of board, you rake it down with, and then, you sure to get that level. But they just do it by line, and the line can drop.

.... They don't mix their mortar strong, you know ... that's why plenty of the house damp, I believe soak ... damp ... And building these new houses, see, they only use one brick now. The old houses them here, they used two bricks and they lap it ... and to me that way is much stronger.

At his father's death, informant had applied to take over the latter's butcher's license. This was granted after he made application to the Custos of the Parish and went through the normal registration procedures which included submission of photographs and having blood and physical tests. He said he had to operate within very strict hygienic rules otherwise he would lose all his meat and his license if the Inspectors found him contravening health and safety rules pertaining to the butchering and sale of meat. As there were only two of them as butchers in the district, he was responsible for supplying meat, not only for his own district but for two surrounding ones.

I asked informant why he decided to come to the UK and he replied:-

I don't know, ... just the advertisement that you see and .. I did want to bring up my kids then real good, and hearing about England, the Mother Country, as everybody did.... I know I'd have to work because I like to work ... but it didn't work out the way I believe it would .....

His misses didn't want me to come ... We were quite happy and ah ... running together, we didn't want ... we didn't know how long we would have to wait before she could come and didn't want to break up.

My plan was to come here early .... earn some money then go back home ... then if I set up my business and then carry on with my butchering. ... After five years, and I see that I didn't make the headway that I expected myself was to make, I have to decide and send for them (his family)

Mr. Benn obtained work shortly after arriving in the country in 1961. However, far from it being in the skilled category which he certainly was classified - being a stone mason - it was labouring on the building site in the middle of winter.



Six weeks after, on the 5th of March, he was sacked because according to him:-

I couldn't lift the bricks because it have pure snow and ice and then ... (after he was sacked), I went to my bed and ... I kneel down by my bedside and I pray ... that was in June ... I think it was the 21st of June.

I was sleeping away and just like I see a angel fly over me in white and then he gave me two address. He talked to me plain "Go to I.C.I. or Tucker Sylat factory, be there for 7.30" ... And when I wake up and realise that somebody was talking to me I say I must try this out! So when I went to I.C.I ... I should be there for around ... 7.30, but I wake up around 8.00! And when I went there, somebody who was at the head of the queue, he get the job, and he was from Anchovay as well.

So I remember, and I fly down to Tucker Fastener and they did want someone and they take me on.

At the time of interview, informant was working as a Machine Operator in the same job, and had worked for the same firm for well over twenty years. I asked Mr. Benn to explain ways in which he feels his migration to Britain was beneficial or otherwise for him as an individual and he suggested that:-

You get a lot of experience ... if you don't travel you don't know anything about other people, because in Jamaica, when all the whites come there, you wouldn't believe they live in certain areas ... but seeing that you travel now ... meet them, let's say on equal terms, then you know that things wasn't like what they told you back in your country. .... Like they're higher than you ... they're just the same human, trying different things.

If I did pick up a job with good salary, to make a good headway, I would put my money to good use... Have my own house. But, with me, nothing come before my family and I can't see ... and let them have to go out on the street ordinary. ... I like to see people looking good.

Industrialism and the Jamaican Migrant Labourer

There are those who would ascribe unqualified success to those peasant farmers, artisans and multifarious small traders, who made the economic transition from the Caribbean to be proletarianised in highly industrialised Britain. The writer contends, however, that any such ascription is shallow and in many cases far from the truth.

This conclusion is possibly because like Marx, they believe that peasants:-

sphere of production, .... does not allow in its cultivation of any division of labor, no application of science, and therefore of no versatility in its development, no variety of talents, no enrichment in social relations[15].

The above, according to P.K. Crosser supports Marx and Engel's exposition that "non-mechanised production in agriculture cannot survive in an age of advanced industrial technology"[16]. In the same way it was believed that eventually this technological revolution would lead to the eradication of small artisans and entrepreneurs either because they are eventually taken over by bigger magnates or are pauperised into proletarianisation - due to economy of scales competition. The conclusion of this trend of argument is that this will eventually lead to a dichotomic society where the two classes of capitalists and proletarians vie for power; hopefully ending in the ascendancy of the proletariat.

Of course, today's experience indicate that even in the highly industrial technological centres of Western countries, there still exists small land holders or artisans who remain, either because they grafted onto their production modes, some of the 'modern' technology or, they

cater for an exclusive market which allows them to continue with the traditional methods of production and at the same time command an economic price. Crosser argues, however, that Marx's exposition gains validity, not so much in their 'greatly over-anticipated ... disappearance of the artisan producer .... but the loss of his social and economic strength is the significant consideration' [17]. According to Crosser, Marxian interest, like Adam Smith's, was in the 'furthering of the Industrial Order'. This, it is alleged, must of necessity lead to the transformation of the social strata whereby that section of the middle class which gained mobility from the artisan/small manufacturing group will be integrated into the proletariat.

While agreeing with Crosser's argument, several questions beg explanation. For example, to what extent can Marx's exposition above be deemed to be indicative of a non-Eurocentric setting? Contemporary situations in most Third World Countries indicate that advanced industrial sectors both in agriculture and industry, have continued to exist side by side with pre-industrial modes of production. Does this mean, therefore, that it is only in societies where industrialisation has permeated every sector of the economy - such as in Western Europe, North America, and Japan can large scale eradication and integration of the peasantry, artisan and small scale entrepreneurs occur? Further, in the realities of third economic development, can one realistically regard the dissolution of these groups as necessary for working class release from capitalist exploitation?

The introduction of western style technology both in Primary and secondary economic sectors often creates labour surplus rather than a 'full employment' situation. Therefore, instead of proletarianised workers - forged tools of the class struggle - a host of lumpen proletariats are created,

whose state of destitution often forces them to disregard any class affiliation/organisation.

Converse to this is the belief that more autonomy is afforded workers such as the peasant farmer or small artisan/trader. Further, according to Allen and Wolkowits:- 'Others see self-employment, small business and homeworking as avenues for 'autonomous' capital accumulation, or as providing more scope for the expression of initiative, enterprise, and independence outside the restrictions imposed by the state or trade unions on the personnel policies of large firms.'<sup>[18]</sup>

In contrast to these 'positives', however, Allen and Wolkowits referred to Gerry (1985) in their suggestion that 'For many, so far as remuneration is concerned, self-employment is not so much a choice as a 'rubbish dump' for those whose labour is relatively surplus to capital's present requirements. Thus, according to them:-

"The encouragement and growth of the small-scale sector is part and parcel of the more general casualisation of employment, though which capital invites workers of many different kinds to assume a greater share of the costs of production and/or reproduction and to accept a lower return on their labour. The petty trader of craftsman is in effect asked to provide for or to supplement the costs of his or her own reproduction, saving the state all or part of these costs."<sup>[19]</sup>

While it is not the intention of the writer to glamorize the small-scale sector and thereby minimize the adversities involved in this form of production, there are, none-the-less several factors which must be pointed out. Firstly, any other form of production save the small-scale proprietor is alien to most third world labourers, and importantly, is a Western phenomena ushered into being with the Industrial Revolution.

Even under a slave system or serfdom, although the labour power of slaves was owned and at times used completely by the owner, nevertheless, there more often than not existed scope for these bound labourers to be involved in their own small-scale businesses. Indeed, it was through these enterprises that many bound labour, whether in the slave colonies or in Russia-serfdom were able to purchase their freedom!

Small-scale proprietorship was not a result of capitalist ejection from various forms of organised modes of production. It was a distinctly separate development which preceded and have managed to escape being incorporated into a capitalist mode of production. As is evidenced by information gained from MMID respondents, they were socialised into believing that a period of apprenticeship - whether formally through a training institution or informally, through attachment to a skilled trades-person - and later setting up on ones own, was the normal way of transition to the world of work. Even today, in view of the many dislocations caused by capitalism and its off-spring large-scale mechanical factory production, many third world economists and theoreticians encourage a retainment or return to traditional modes of production, though borrowing from western methods where efficacy can be proven.

From personal testimonies of respondents like Mr. Gregg in Case Study 4 [ii], the life of a peasant farmer was hard, time consuming, and in monetary terms, remuneration was small; and yet the informant commented that he was proud to till the soil and that it made him happy to make a living that way. From sale of his produce he always had money coming into the home - though small - it was sufficient to feed himself and his family. He had also practiced animal husbandry, had gone into secondary production - making sugar from the cane which he grew, and when extra labour was

required, his compatriots in the village would operate a time loan scheme, whereby each person had help without needing to make monetary reimbursement. Of course, there were others who actually employed workers - albeit some seasonal, as is emphasised in Case Study 5 [iv]. This case study indicates more clearly the types of activities in which many peasant farmers often became involved and thus gives an indication of the kinds of skills which they developed in execution of their work. Not only did this informant engage in straight production and marketing of commodities, they were also involved in animal husbandry, purchasing and butchering of animals and selling of meat, as well as negotiating with government officials both to arrange for the sale of certain commodities as well as to spray their crops.

Perhaps the most valuable asset of this way of life is the great degree of enterprising spirit which it engendered, not to mention the independence and gratification which resulted from being one's own boss. In Chapter one, Stone was cited as believing that for small farmers "dignity and sense of independence that comes from working a piece of land" \*.... style and rhythms of life are tied to the social and psychic values derived from working the land," was more important to the peasant than material rewards. One could add too, that this observation is relevant in terms of small artisans and entrepreneurs within the context of their specific work. Even in the presence of avid competition from large technocratic competitors, writers like Babu would define the work done by these groups as productive and gainful employment more so than many of those in the so-called 'service' industries. Of more significance for this study, however, is the extent to which prior experiences assisted these workers in their new working environment in Britain.

When Senior and Manley carried out their study in 1955 for the Jamaican government, they reported:-

The employers' standpoint was expressed directly by the employers interviewed, all of whom were enthusiastic about the West Indian worker. Labour Ministry officials many times said "the employers are well satisfied, although there are a few exceptions. However, we no longer have any trouble 'selling' the West Indian migrant to the employer who has given them a fair trial".[20]

Griffiths, on the other hand stressed that:-

The most common complaint about coloured people of both sexes and of all nationalities in industry is that they are often slow workers when they begin, and this we heard in almost every town from a variety of sources. The immigrants were not brought up in an industrial atmosphere where a child picks up almost unconsciously the attitudes and unspoken assumptions of factory life. They have to accustom themselves to the tempo of work and the alien environment of industry. They have to learn the complex relationships that are considered proper by their work-mates to govern not only contacts between management and staff but also those between the employees themselves. All this cannot be learnt in a day by immigrants with a rural background who are not used to gadgets and machines. The clumsiness of some immigrant workers of all nationalities is also commented on fairly widely.

The writer proceeded to suggest however that:-

the evidence suggests that when the immigrants do settle down they seem to be no better or worse than the white workers. One firm in Slough is reputed to prefer West Indians from Anguilla (most West Indians in Slough are believed to come from there) to local white labour because they work harder.[21] (my emphasis)

In 1951 Anthony Richmond[22] undertook a study of 345 West Indian Volunteers who came to England during the last War. Most of the men were sent to factories in the North of England - predominantly in the Liverpool area. Although

Richmond's research was based on documentary data, compiled by the "Regional and Local Offices of the Ministry of Labour", he believed his conclusion was representative of the fact, because, as he stated:- "the research as a whole has involved interviews with many of the men with whom this study is concerned".

In commenting on the general skills level, Richmond alleged that:-

The actual skill of these men on arrival depended a great deal upon the extent and nature of the experience that they had been able to acquire in the Colony. Some had in fact served full apprenticeship and came here with high qualifications. Others had undoubtedly succeeded in posing as skilled, having got through the rudimentary tests applied before sailing, but in fact possessed very limited experience and ability

He continued to stress however that:-

Reports upon the men from Labour Supply Inspectors soon after their arrival noted that many of the men were unused to working to the fine limits of precision expected in England and did best when put on one type of work for a considerable period so that they could acquire facility by repetition. Some of the men, however, proved readily adaptable and quick to learn and soon earned high praise from their employers[23].

In the particular study of the first sample group of 180 skilled Jamaican technicians the broad occupational fields from which they came is indicated in Figure 4.5 below. In commenting on how levels of skill acquisition was attributed, Richmond stated that:-



"Where similar occupations as indicated in the Ministry of Labour record have been classified as either skilled or semi-skilled, evidence of having served a full apprenticeship or being accepted as a grade one trade union member was required before being classified as skilled." [24]

In the final assessment of these skilled technicians studied, it was found that approx. 3% were believed to be very bad, and about 4% poor, 21% were deemed to be average, over 52% good and approx. 20% were excellent.

The second group in the sample comprised 129 "men who had little or no industrial experience at home but who received their training in England by undertaking a short course of specialised training in a Government Training Centre before proceeding to work in the factories." Richmond suggested that "A report on some of the West Indians during training remarked that their progress appeared to be as good as, if not better than, the equivalent European" From his study he concluded that of these men with no prior industrial skill, approx. 2% was very bad, 5% poor, over 53% average, almost 36% good and about 3% excellent.

Not enough scientific work has been done to examine productivity of Afro-Caribbean immigrants against other immigrant groups, or indeed, the wider society. Of course, it should not necessarily be assumed that productivity is in any way a true test of skills acquisition. Numerous labour history exists to indicate that levels of output are often used by workers at various times as a protection mechanism, a bargaining tool, or even a pacifier between workers (points which gain reinforcement from the Extract below). While it might be assumed that the alleged initial low productivity of these and other migrant worker was virtually inevitable; bearing in mind the completely alien living experiences they had to adjust to, within an often hostile environment; the writer suggests that because of the high

degree of, often negative, subjectivity which has been incorporated into comments about black people generally, as well as the subtle negotiations which take place on the shop floor, there is a need for empirically directed re-examination of such of the early comments and conclusions about 'New Commonwealth' immigrants.

The writer has indicated that for thousands of first generation, Afro-Caribbean immigrants to Britain, especially those numbered amongst the unskilled sector, industrial initiation took place in the United States. This it has been suggested herein, would no doubt have contributed positively to their productivity performance, yet to date, this has been ignored in discussions about their integration into industrial life in Britain. Senior and Manley found that:-

The "jack of all trades" attitude of many of the West Indians workers was also reported as an irritating factor among both employers and labour exchange personnel..... More would seem to be a prime example of what is a virtue in one environment turning into a vice in another. The West Indian who can work as a carpenter, bricklayer, housepainter, or in concrete construction, etc. may well be far better off than his neighbour who is confined to job possibilities in only one occupation, e.g as a carpenter. Migration to Great Britain, however, makes a radical change in the situation because of different skills and degrees of specialisation<sup>23</sup>.

The Case Studies herewith certainly gives credence to the 'jack of all trades' thesis, yet one cannot conclude that this necessarily meant 'master of none'. More importantly, however it is contended that these multifarious labour activities, prepared these migrant labourers for the

flexibility which was necessary to gain employment in the post World War Britain.

There were, of course, some who had received no prior training, yet felt confident that they could learn quickly - given a fair chance. It is relevant in concluding this section, therefore, to listen to Mrs. Tallock's early industrial experience in Britain. We will be meeting her later on in Chapter 9 in a detailed Case Study on her entrepreneurship. However, the writer has decided to use an extract here, as she tells most vividly the negotiations involved in obtaining work which was believed to be 'beyond her', and through her story we are given the chance to briefly follow her early progress:-

Extract - 4.1

I went to Balesell Heath ... We went up to Abrahams the morning ... dis girl was working there an she tell mi an I went and wait. Di Receptionist come an deh sen mi into the Personal Office. When I was dere talking to di woman ... two men were passing and deh look at me ..... he was the Production Manager .... he is a Jew ... an di other one was Abraham himself ... he was a little man. She (The Personnel Manageress) said something to him, I didn't hear, for yu know I didn't understan when deh talk at dat time ... and he said "Oh no, she don't have no experience ..." So, I didn't wait fi de girl seh anyting more, I said to him "Yu talking about me?" He said "yes, you looking fi a welding job, yu don't have no experience, do you? Yu got to have ten years experience."

I said to him, "I only come in dis country, not a year yet ... is almost ten months, but I have more experience than yu people dat born here and live here."

Di other man said to him "yu better give her a chance, she's a right one there" And he said to her, "O.K. give her di job", an him give mi di job, .... and I went there, an doan ask if I didn't work, I get on very well. An when I went, I got to know welding, they were

doing pickle forks. The foreman was an Irish man ... he said no body would do dat job dat I'm doing because it burn ... and deh burn di jobs, and as soon as deh test dem deh break, so they had a pile ..... an deh make fancy tings .... I used to make the pickle forks. At first he (the foreman) seh to me, if yu do well on dis job, when yu trial up you will have a job.

Di jig was made bad ... yu got to put it dat way, and (when) yu peep ovva, di sparks coming up ... so I went in an ask di foreman ... I seh dis ting turn to me, an I can't see, so if you make the jig dat I can put it behind the welder ... bring the welder down on it and when I weld them I can see what I doing... The man seh "right .. anything to make the job go through" ... an him make the jig... after the first week deh put mi on piece work..... It was a better paying job, but di girls dem didn't want to do it because it burn.

Mrs. Tallock said while she worked in industry she did power press, welding, capstan and assembly work. She said she was a good, fast worker and feels that because of this, she has never been discriminated against by her white bosses. In fact, she was used by the organisation in time and motion studies - which could have disadvantaged her work colleagues, because, according to her:-

On some of the jobs deh (her work mates) go back in the Office an deh complain dat they didn't earn they money .... and the time study man will come around and he will study the job, and they still complaining, because you see, deh doan work for a hour before deh go in the toilet go sit down an waste time.

So they (the time and motion study people) will come out and seh "alright, we putting somebody else on it tomorrow morning ... if dat person don't earn their money, we'll make you up. I don't know, and they put me on .... an I go on, an di girl in the Office come out an give you the paper with the price and the minutes ... an sometimes she work it out an tell yu how much a hour yu got to do.... You go dere and sit down an yu work, yu don't know dat they are testing you, to match up to somebody.

When yu work, suppose yu got to do three thousan for di day .. from 8.00 a.m. until say half past four, well, when half past four, yu must have yu time.... when the individual is good an di machine working..... Sometimes all dinner time I have three thousand already! So I just go slow, sit dere ... I doan walk about ... and if yu said, "Are you going to clock a cup-a-tee?" I says, "alright, I'll go" I'll seh to you "How yu going?" Yu say "Oh I need another hundred" So I load up yu pan ... to kill time .... and then I go back an I will do another thousan for meself ovva, and then when they check you out tomorrow morning and they check me back with you, they seh I earn my money dan how yu didn't earn it ... I have the same labourer ... the press didn't go wrong.

I asked her whether that made her work mates turn against her and she said yes. If they were given batches of work and they saw her name on the list, they would first go to the Office to find out how many she had done the previous day. According to her, the girl in the office didn't tell them the full amount, instead she would say that Mrs. Tallook did three thousand the previous day, when in fact she had done five thousand.

Mrs. Tallook said the work she has had to do in the factories in Britain was hard, because she didn't have any experience. Importantly, she stressed:-

Maybe the men dat travel to America and come here, they have a little more experience of seeing type of things like this, machineries and ting ... but we didn't, for some of the presses are very big, take up a big space ... and when yu bang yu foot down ... and dat ting coming down!.... Scared ...! Until afterward you get used to it..... Some people seh they couldn't work power presses ... look like it guine fall on dem....

Being a practising Christian, Mrs. Tallook attributes her success in gaining this employment and being good at her job as 'due God's Grace'. According to her, 'On dat morning when I got that job, hadn't it been fi Him, the man would-a

just thrown me through di door, with mi cheek!' Her willingness to rise to a challenge and to confront employers gained her a job - albeit one which, according to her 'none of the other girls wanted to do'. One of the major problems with the particular job, had to do with the equipment, she was using, and the informant was able to make suggestions for minor modifications which made operation on that particular machine much easier and no doubt saved the company some money. So effective were the modifications made, at her suggestion, that informant said she eventually left that Company because a new Charge-hand took her off the machine saying she had an unfair monopoly over the other workers due to the extensive pace at which she was able to work, yet previously no one wanted to do those particular jobs.

From her own account, her productivity level was very high - so much so that through time-and-motion studies, her employers gauged the price of difficult jobs by studying her. This meant, however, that she was inadvertently causing antagonism amongst her fellow workers who were unable to keep the same pace, and therefore earned less. To a certain extent she seemed to have been rather smug, suggesting that her fellow workers were too eager to take rest periods. At the same time, however, Mrs. Tallock was fully conscious of the need for some degree of working class solidarity, and consequently, adopted strategies which would not have significantly jeopardised her take-home pay, nevertheless was enough, she believed to pacify her work-mates.

Scrutiny of the above case studies emphasises the fact that although many of their artisan and proprietorship skills might have appeared to be superfluous to industrial Britain, closer examination will indicate otherwise. Secondary skills - such as negotiating, asserting, communicating,

marketing/trading, and general entrepreneurship, were, undoubtedly utilisable and relevant in any society. These, together with the confidence which management of one's own business engenders - must have helped in the settling in process.

Prior flexibility of employment practices which permitted intermittent self-employment and working for wages, has possibly hardened migrants like the above to the buffeting of cyclical depressions. In the British context, the above is especially relevant when statistics reveal that black people are disproportionately represented amongst the 'official' unemployed. One wonders, however, whether in times as these people revert to exploiting their imported skills and expertise in an attempt to beat the ravages of unemployment, though as members of the alternative economy.

There is, undoubtedly, need for serious study in this area, especially as the present economic climate and the leanings of the present government claim to support small proprietorship, lauding it as the panacea for the serious structural unemployment which we now face. One is conscious of the fact that in Britain of the 1980's, this is none other than a diverting tactic adopted by the government to cloak serious social and economic effects of the present naked capitalism being practiced.

### Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to give the reader some understanding of the kinds of social and economic backgrounds from which Jamaican migrants came. Through the intimate details of the case studies, we have been able to gain first-hand knowledge about the specific skills and other characteristics which migrants had, on entry to Britain, and to interpret these alongside some of the contemporary comments which were made about them.

We have seen that like most waves of immigrants, some needed a period of settling in before they were able to perform competitively in an industrial setting. The more novel the experience, the longer possibly the adjustment period required, thus one informant, Mrs. Tallock suggested that while those people who had gone to America had been able to acquaint themselves with industrial life, people like her had a whole new learning to do. The very strangeness and size of the machines they had to use was enough to create panic in their hearts - these had to be overcome, however, and this they did - because they had financial obligations to meet, both in Britain and in the Caribbean.

There were those, like the skilled technicians in Richmond's study above, who were injected immediately into industry with their 'home' training, the majority of whom were believed to have performed average and above, when compared to the indigenous workers. Likewise, the other 129 trainees who received their skills training in the UK, were, likewise said to have acquired a standard predominantly average and above.

The scene, hopefully has been set for a clearer contextual understanding of the processes involved in the migrant labourers' transition and settlement from a predominantly



pre-modern to a highly mechanised industrial society. The following chapters will look more closely at the strategies adopted by these migrants in their attempt to come to terms with industrialism and this new social and economic order, often within the parameters set by workers protection mechanisms, xenophobia, prejudice, blatant racism and more often than not, plain ignorance.

Endnotes : Chapter 5

- [1] Pollard, S. The Adaptation of the Labour Force : In Genesis of Modern Management (1969: Pps. 160-208)
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- [5] Daily Worker of Monday August 5th, 1957
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- [7] Radio 4 programme : A follow-up Programme on New Commonwealth Migration to Britain, 20 years on. Autumn, 1984.
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- [10] Ruck, S.K., Editor, The West Indian Comes to England, (1960 : 8), Routledge & Kegan Paul.
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- [12] Ibid.
- [13] Ibid.
- [14] Respondent here refers to a mental illness. By refusing to immigrate disabled individuals, sending economies are further exploited with departure of able-bodied ones.
- [15] Marx, C. : Cited in P.K. Crosser, Ideologies and American Labor, (1961 : 96), Oxford University Press.
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- [17] Ibid (Pps. 97)
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- [22] Richmond, A.M. : Relation Between Skill And Adjustment of a Group of West Indian Negro Workers in England (July 1961 : 152-169), Occupational Psychology, Vol. XXV Number 3.
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**CHAPTER 1 : 6**  
**JAMAICANS AT WORK**  
**IN THE WEST MIDLANDS**

**Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two Sections. Section I sets the scene by examining 1940's contemporary labour needs in the West Midlands and the various strategies adopted to meet these needs. It then proceeds to examine the actual incorporation of Black workers into the West Midlands labour market during the crucial post-1945 industrial reconstruction period. Integral to this section is that, through the WMID the migrants work-face experiences and perceptions will be investigated. This, necessarily involves looking specifically at inter/intra-ethnic group collaboration, training acquisition and new skills and qualifications gained.

Implicit in these examinations is the underlying quest to discover ways in which anxieties were manifested by indigenous co-workers, as a result of the injection of Black workers into the work force, and the consequent action/reaction of WMID informants.

**Section I : POST 1940 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR**  
**NEEDS.**

**Post War Reconstruction of the West Midlands**

The profound rationalisations which occurred in the West Midlands during the Depression and later the war period, had paved the way for economic expansion and would, most likely have led to mass immigration to the region if the War had not intervened and 'placed on hold' many of the developments

which had begun to be regarded as potentially contributory to sustained growth, after the 1930's stagnation.

By the time the Second World War broke out, Birmingham was already an established gun producer and the City and other places in the region had already proved their ability to switch from civilian to militaria. Preparation for the First World War had necessitated a movement away from small, family size production to larger mechanised units which were less labour intensive. In emphasising the adaptability of local firms during the re-armament period, Sutcliffe and Smith wrote:-

Many Birmingham firms, whose normal products were far removed from armaments, re-adapted themselves. Cadbury's set up Bournville Utilities Limited, which made a direct contribution to the country's military needs. At its peak of production 2,000 people were employed, and plant and personnel that before the War had been making chocolate were now making aeroplane parts, rockets, respirators, and other munitions. Cadbury's were also able to give accommodation to other firms involved in the war effort such as Austin Motor Company, as well as the Ministries of Works and Food. ... the skills of the jewellers and silversmiths, .... were used to make component parts for radar equipment, rifles, and aeroplanes. [1]

The War occasioned rationalisations in industry which were to have long term effects on the actual physical structure of Birmingham. In response to the Board of Trade Policy in 1947 - greater concentration took place amongst the firms in the City. This, together with the constraints which War placed on the acquisition of raw materials, led to greater co-operation between firms, and organised sharing led to more effective utilisation of equipment. At the same time, however, this concentration led to the failure of many small firms who could not survive amongst the competition which concentration created. This was especially true of those who remained starved of government contracts - a fact which they continually lamented.

By the end of 1944 productivity had increased tremendously. Between 1938 - 1944 approximately 8,500,000 square feet of new factory floor space was built in Birmingham. Despite bombings and resultant losses of manpower, factories and houses, by the end of the War Birmingham and elsewhere in the region had experienced phenomenal growth, proving yet again that, in a strange way, the City seems to thrive from national and inter-national catastrophes. The economic base was thus set for reconstruction when the War ended.

In 1945, Ernest Bevin, then Minister of Labour, informed the City that it would be necessary to control industry after the War.[2] In Birmingham, in particular, industry had expanded unprecedentedly, while the middle belt of the surrounding Black Country had continued to decline - a process which began in the last century. To reinforce the government's commitment in this regard, the Distribution of Industry Bill was passed and this required Industrialists to notify the Board of Trade if their floor space was likely to exceed 3,000 square feet. This angered many of Birmingham's politicians and industrialists who expressed their indignation in a series of articles in the Birmingham Mail for several months during 1945.

Mr. J.L. Edwards, one of the few supporters of dispersal argued in the thick of the debate:-

There is no doubt, however, that another and more feasible circle should exist for the common good of all industry, through planning to bring regular employment to as many areas as possible and by not over-concentrating in well-established industrial areas. The purchasing power of a greater proportion of the population would be increased and a reservoir against concentrated depression would be provided. [3]

In summing up the debate, however, Councillor Bradbeer stressed that the purpose of his article has been to:-

show how one industry springs out of and is inter-dependent with another, and that in an area like Birmingham and district, there is a kind of a social and economic organism which has historical growth and a changing continuity which might easily be irreparably damaged by unwise interference and ill-considered action...

If by 'planning' is meant the diversion of a certain amount of industry from an existing area to a pre-war distressed area, then this is not going to be satisfactory. It will not serve local or national interests. It will be inefficient and uneconomic. It will merely result in the distribution of unemployment. If, on the other hand, a plan is produced which will introduce new industries into the pre-war distressed areas, then the whole country will benefit.[4]

It was also generally believed that control would hinder re-development and replacement of obsolete factories, as well as those which had been damaged during the War. (The City Centre had been left badly damaged after the War, because the Germans, having failed to destroy industrial areas which had been located in outer zones of the City, decided to concentrate on destroying the Administrative structure. The decision to place shadow factories on the outskirts of the City was a successful tactical move. However, because bombings were directed on the centre, a delay in reconstruction was highlighted vividly and visitors to Birmingham often complained about the lack of amenities and the awful devastation. More importantly, however, the imposition of control from without, went against the individualism which had played a vital role in Birmingham's economic development.

By 1948 following two Studies (The West Midlands Plan and a study on conurbations by the West Midlands Group), [5] it was accepted that the expansion of conurbations should be curtailed and that some degree of control and dispersal of industries was necessary. This was mainly to try to arrest industrial decline and to generate new industries into depressed areas.

### Muscle versus Machines

An increase in the growth of industrial population was curtailed in 1939-40, by massive conscription. Consequently, even though immigration continued, there was still a demand for industrial manpower. There were drastic declines of 61,020 and 61,532 in 1939 and 1940 respectively, and a further population loss of 1,639 in 1944 due to emigration. This no doubt reflected Birmingham's enormous contribution of labour to the Military Services. Nevertheless, the West Midlands, and Birmingham's industries in particular was of strategic military importance, consequently, manpower had to be obtained from any available source. Irish immigration continued and conscripted labour was directed into War productivity while internal immigration from traditional labour reserves in Scotland, Wales and increasingly, the economically depressed areas of Tyneside progressed.

Despite the influx of immigrants during the War years, Birmingham experienced a net loss of 97,000 persons between 1939 and 1945. The depopulation process which had begun during the War meant that people who left the City, sought work in areas nearest to their residences. Consequently, as the number of jobs increased in Birmingham, population failed to keep pace. This state of full employment helped trade unions to obtain a foot-hold or consolidate their positions in many industries.

The phenomenal growth in industry during the inter-war years was facilitated mainly because Birmingham - more than any other area in Britain was successful in getting a large percentage of "non-service" population into employment; at times this necessitated drafting in juveniles, and housewives. Volunteers were also mobilised to increase war production, thus by late 1944, a total of 400,000 - more than one third of the city's population was engaged in munitions and other industries producing for military needs. By 1944 as much as 47 per cent of the "non-service" population was in work. This was a great achievement,

especially when for most of the 1930's the City had been experiencing population decline - due to actual emigration.

By 1945, there was, once again, an increase in outward movement, reaching a peak of 33,110 in this same year. The War had left a sound base from which vibrant industrial development could take place, in the reconstruction period which followed, but labour continued to pose a threat to full exploitation of this situation. Thus, supply both home and foreign, lagged far behind demand.

The post 1948 movement to new Development Areas, were not simply adhering to Government's dictates, it was also reflecting an attempt by new industrialists to obtain adequate labour without having to compete against a host of other employers. In an article in the Times in September, 1948, Sir Robert Mills, a former President of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce wrote:-

The development areas are attracting new industries which in the past might have been expected to come to the Midlands. The Pressure on labour supplies from existing industries makes firms considering new projects reluctant to come to the area, although its skilled and specialised labour will always ensure the maintenance of a high level of industrial activity.

The ex-President continued:-

The chronic shortage of labour has the effect of forcing the pace of capital development. In the Potteries, for instance, the installation of continuous firing ovens, which is being completed on a large scale, has been connected with the fact that labour in this industry can no longer be attracted on the basis of intermittent employment. Similarly, the acute shortage of skilled foundry labour has been one of the factors speeding the pace of re-equipment in the foundries in Wolverhampton and elsewhere in the Midlands. Many of these schemes are expensive, but they have already produced striking results in recruiting more workers and raising their productivity. [6]

As Mills pointed out, in the absence of adequate labour supply, especially skilled labour, the next best alternative was mechanisation. Machines could be introduced to perform



the most intricate stages in manufacturing while unskilled tasks could be performed by migrant workers both internal and external. Mechanisation, however, is usually a very expensive way to increase productivity; unless competitive economies of scales can be achieved by mass production. In Post War Birmingham, capital investment as a labour shortage solution, was not an affordable alternative for many industrialists. This was because, despite great economic strides which had been made in the City, 'small businesses' continued to dominate as employers of labour, in both commerce and industry. The following Table, though relating to 1937, continued to show no real change in these groupings in 1948. Indeed, in an article in the Financial Times, 20th September, 1948, it was reported "The most recent survey undertaken this year, shows no appreciable change in these (business) groupings." [7]

TABLE 1.6 [1]

1937

Numbers Employed	Number of Employers
Under 20	10,650
Between 20-50	1,285
Between 50-100	547

Source: The West Midlands A Regional Study: HMSO

In 1948, there were at least 50,000 jobs vacant in the Midlands and an estimated 99,000 thousand to follow from new buildings and refurbishing of old buildings. By this latter period too, there appears to have been a rapid decline in the number of small businesses and although they still seemed to represent the largest employing group, nevertheless, those employing under 20 people, declined from 10,650 in 1937 to a mere 1,660, a fall of 0.16%, in 1952). Likewise, those employers with a work force of up to 100,

declined from 547 in 1937 to 264, a fall of 0.488, by the same year (1952).

TABLE : 6 (2)

## SIZE OF BIRMINGHAM FIRMS

Employing	1952		1971	
	No.	%	No.	%
2,000-	15	0.7	16	0.8
1,000-	38	1.7	34	1.7
750-	22	1.0	15	0.8
500-	39	1.8	27	1.4
400-	33	1.5	26	1.4
300-	40	1.8	38	2.0
200-	95	4.3	65	3.4
100-	264	12.0	157	8.2
11-	1,660	75.2	1,544	80.3

Source: Birmingham Abstract of Statistics

A shortage of manpower continued to plague Birmingham in the years following the War and indeed, right through to the early 1960's. This became the topic of public debate in many of the local papers. In the earliest post-War days, the shortage was for skilled labour. For example, 15th September, 1945 the Birmingham Post on reported:-

A serious shortage of skilled electricians is hindering the industrial change over from war to peace production in Birmingham.

... This is becoming one of the big labour problems in the City. [8]

By 20th November, of the same year The Post stated:-

~~STRENGTHENING - TIME TO BRIDGE ON THE GOVERNMENT~~

Strong criticism of the Government's policy of calling up skilled men from industry, whom it was impossible to replace, was made at yesterday's meeting of Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. It was decided to write to the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Labour.

One speaker said:

We knew of a Birmingham firm which formerly employed 500 toolmakers, and now employed 300. With a much bigger programme than they had previously, fifty toolmakers were about to be taken away.

And on a strangely familiar note, the report continued:-

The main defects in the present educational facilities of the country were considered to be a serious neglect of the fundamental and elementary essentials, with the result that there had been deterioration in respect of the "Three R's."

On the recruitment of boys and girls, it was suggested that there was a need for closer liaison between schools and industries. [9]

From October, avid recruitment of regional labour had commenced because, as the Birmingham Mail stressed:-

Birmingham's industries which are clamouring for labour - some of them anxious to be equipped for Britain's battle for exports - are recruiting workers from many parts of the country.

One firm alone, which can absorb 500 or 600 more people immediately, has secured the help of the Ministry of Labour in obtaining labour from Wales.

The article continued ...

The heavy burden of output to regain and expand the British export market, as well as to meet essential home requirements, will tend to fall more and more on firmly established industrial centres like Birmingham - a case of history repeating itself, for the same position developed 26 years ago. Mobility of labour is the immediate solution. [10]

Many of the firms arranged training schemes so that these recruits would be given In-Service Training, supervised by skilled personnel within the firms. In addition, local technical colleges and the University were drafted in to assist with the formulation of Courses so that employees could be taught necessary skills, on a Day-release and Evening basis. Although crucial labour need was in the skilled category, very soon there was also a demand for unskilled labour too. A full employment situation and greater training facilities enabled upward mobility of indigenous labour. Moreover, those who had been taught specialist skills mainly to meet War needs, were no longer content to return to unskilled employment when they were demobilised. Further, if this employment could be found in a more pleasant geographical location than the highly urbanised Birmingham, then it was grasped with great enthusiasm. Orders were said to be 'pouring in from all over the world' and manufacturers - through the Chamber of Commerce, expressed their fear that they would be unable to meet demands. The state of desperation is highlighted in the appeal made by Sir. Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade when he told Birmingham Trades Council that the 'salvation of the country lay only in increased production.' But, said he:-

Where then is the extra labour coming from which is going to enable us to balance our external trade, restock our depleted domestic stores of all kinds, raise our standard first to pre-war level and then above? [11]

An increase in the growth of industrial population was curtailed in 1939-40, by massive conscription. There were

drastic declines of 61,020 and 61,832 in 1939 and 1940 respectively, and a further population loss of 1,639 in 1944 due to emigration. This no doubt reflected Birmingham's enormous contribution of labour to the Military Services. Nevertheless, the West Midlands, and Birmingham's industries in particular was of strategic military importance, consequently, manpower had to be obtained from any available source. Irish immigration continued and conscripted labour was directed into War productivity while internal immigration from traditional labour reserves in Scotland, Wales and increasingly, the economically depressed areas of Tyneside progressed.

The phenomenal growth in industry during the inter-war years was facilitated mainly because Birmingham - more than any other area in Britain was successful in getting a large percentage of "non-service" population into employment; at times this necessitated drafting in juveniles, and housewives. Volunteers were also mobilised to increase war production, thus by late 1944, a total of 400,000 - more than one third of the city's population was engaged in munitions and other industries producing for military needs. By 1944 as much as 47 per cent of the "non-Service" population was in work. This was a great achievement, especially when for most of the 1930's the City had been experiencing population decline - due to actual emigration.

Despite the influx of immigrants during the War years, Birmingham experienced a net loss of 97,000 persons between 1939 and 1945 - actually peaking at 33,110 in the latter year. The depopulation process which had begun during the War meant that people who left the City, sought work in areas nearest to their residences. Consequently, as the number of jobs increased, population failed to keep pace. This state of full employment helped trade unions to obtain a foot-hold or consolidate their positions in many industries.

### Injection of Irish Labour

Injection of Irish migrant labour into specific growth generating areas such as building and civil engineering, has been significant in the whole economic development of this and other countries to which they migrated. Clave quotes an English economist and politician in 1865 as observing:

"the people who grovel in the huts of Fepperrary at once possess so many industrial virtues, when they can labour under favourable economic conditions, that they have become the pioneers of civilisation in the Western World, the chief founders of nations which seem likely to rival us in wealth and prosperity." [12]

Not only did their relations who went to the U.S.A. prove this observation factual, but in England, the worth of Irish migrants has been proved many times over.

In the re-armament period, finding themselves short of manual labour, manufacturers turned again to the reserve labour army in Ireland. Local firms such as I.C.I., and Austins recruited directly from Eire in an effort to fulfill their labour needs. They were soon followed by the City Transport and British Railways who had special recruiting facilities such as free passage and other allowances in addition to a 24/6d. settling-in allowance which the Ministry of Labour paid to recruited workers.

From as early as 1940, the Unionist member for Yardley in Birmingham, E.W. Salt had been against the practise of using Ireland as a source of labour in England. This was because they were believed to be taking the jobs of conscripted people, when they themselves were exempt from conscription. This sentiment was to be expressed later on in the 1950's when demobilisation and a slowing down in economic growth, together with gross over-crowding (an endemic factor throughout the period of the City's economic expansion), led to outcries against Irish immigrants. By and large, however, employers appeared to have welcomed the advantages of this imported labour.

The Irish, being the largest wave of immigrants into Birmingham before the Commonwealth immigrants is said to have paved the way for later immigrants, especially in areas of accommodation. As will be seen later, the immigration of so called 'coloureds' into Birmingham seemed to have formed clusters in the same areas as the Irish. Many West Indians shared accommodation with Irish immigrants in the various multi-occupation residences at the time. There is little doubt that the over-representation of Irish immigrants in unskilled and very low paid jobs, like later immigrants, ensured that they had to seek low-rent accommodation and thus, the dictates of economics rather than comprador affinity was behind the joint Irish/Black clusters in the City.[13]

#### **Exploding Labour from the Caribbean**

Strategically important economic sectors remained starved of labour, and still the Government procrastinated about actively recruiting Black labour. A serious observation is the extent to which Parliamentarians of the day clutched at popular irrationalities about Black people and attempted to legitimate these in debates about containment and possible expulsion of the latter. Observing this phenomena, Carter, Harris and Joshi stressed that:-

In building its strong case, the state undertook nothing less than a political project in which notions of 'belonging' and 'community' were reconstructed in terms of 'racial' attachments and national identity organised around skin colour. This reconstruction simultaneously involved the deracialisation of the Irish who "... are not - whether they like it or not - a different race from the ordinary inhabitants of Great Britain" ...Only by arguing "... boldly along such lines" could Irish exclusion from the 1955 draft Bill avoid political criticism. [14]

Eventually, however, New Commonwealth labour markets were exploited. Industrial labour was drafted in from the then British Commonwealth - predominantly from the Caribbean and the Asian sub-continent. Many of these earliest migrants had

been recruited as War Manpower, but unlike the Irish, had returned to their own countries at the end of hostilities. Those War Veterans were amongst the first to return to England in 1948 on the 'Windrush' - this time in an unlooked bid to seek employment. It was only natural that many of these people would travel to Birmingham in their quest for work.

The following representative testimonies give an indication of how labour hungry many employers were:-

1st : "In 1955 when I came here, you didn't need anybody to help you find a job, that was easy. You'd go to the Exchange to sign on, you get your Card and they could send you to twenty five jobs if you wanted, because there was more jobs around than men." (Male informant - Carpenter in Jamaica and did the same job in the U.K.)

2nd : "I landed at Southampton the Friday evening (August 1959) and I travelled all night, practically... got to New Street Station ... and took a taxi from New Street. Of course I didn't know where I was going, I just had the address, but when the taxi dropped me at the address it was 4.30 in the morning ... Saturday morning ... and I was home Sunday and I got a job ... start work the Monday.....(doing Foundry work). It was a three-shift job and I started to work the Monday night, 10.00 O'Clock." (Male informant)

Of her husband, a female informant said:-

4th : "Friends in England took my husband to ... where he was working and he got the job, three days after he came..... I went to Guest Keen and Nettlefolds ...it wasn't far and someone told us to try there ... I went to work in October 1951 (after arriving in the country 30th September of the same year.)"

In answer to my query if he had help in finding a job, the following respondent replied:-

3rd : "No ... no I got to find my own way. I go on the street ... I just see notice saying 'vacancy required', an I just pop in ... without fear! And dat was the third day .... I lan here di Friday and the third day ... an tank God, di first day as I go een, I was successful."



a newva know I have penny off di dola ... nutter like dat ... newva been on di dola, till I reach dis age (72 yrs.), before I get pension." (Male mechanic)

Almost all informants said they received a job a few days - at the most a few weeks after arriving in the country. From the response which many of the earliest Caribbean labour migrants got from labour starved manufacturers - their need was greater than any reservations they may have held about using black people. As the President of the Board of Trade had predicted:-

... However such maldistribution of factories and population may produce local pockets of unemployment, we must be critically short of labour overall for many years to come.

... our own people would go even more critically short of necessities than they are today if we gave way to the clamour to allow everybody to export everything they wanted to. [15]

Devison in studying Jamaican migrants in 1960-61, found that the educational attainment of his sample were as follows:-

TABLE 6 [3]

Educational Attainment of Jamaican Migrants  
to Britain : 1960

Level of attainment	Males %	Females %
No formal education	4	0
Primary Grades 1 - 3	15	9
Grades 4 - 6	78	88
Secondary education	2	3

Source: Devison [16]

None of the informants in the West Midland Interview Sample, admitted to receiving no formal education. Of the female

respondents, 61% (13) said they were Primary trained, 33% (7) said they were Secondary trained and 5% (1) said she was College trained. Of male informants, 87% (21) had only received Primary education, 8% (2) had been trained to Secondary level, while only one was College trained as an agriculturalist.

In the Jamaican context, however, it is very difficult to use information as this as an indication of the educational ability of individuals. Many informants who said they were only Primary trained, were educated in what is called 'all age school' where they stayed in the same school from the beginning to the end of their education. If they were considered to be 'bright', they would skip classes and then would probably remain in the 6th grade for several years, until they were 16 yrs. and had to leave school or go on to take 'private lessons'. When fees would have to be paid. This is because, unfortunately, in Jamaica, as in many Developing countries the cost of educational progression is prohibitive for the majority. In terms of functional education, maybe the most that can be said is that, as with the old Secondary Modern Schools - and indeed, to a certain extent, the Comprehensive system here in the U.K. Some were/are good and most children left being at least functionally literate and numerate.

These migrants were certainly a 'gift of human capital'. In commenting on their quality, Fryer stressed:-

The great majority of the West Indian settlers were in their twenties. And they had plenty to offer Britain. Most white people in this country believed - and many still suppose - that the bulk of them were unskilled manual workers. But this is not so. Of the men who came here, only 5 per cent had no skills; of the women, only 3 per cent. In fact, one in four of the men, and half of the women, were non-manual workers. And almost half the men (46 per cent) and over a quarter of the women (27 per cent) were skilled manual workers. Yet the newcomers found themselves in most cases having to settle for a lower job status than they had enjoyed at home. [17]

If, historical precedence is an indication of possible outcome of contemporary events, then the adverse reactions of the British receiving society towards Black labour migrants was not unusual and was, possibly inevitable, given the societal dynamics operating at that time. Thus, Gus John in his commentary On black immigration to Britain, wrote:-

In a country famed for its intolerance of strangers, disparagement of colour, with a peculiar medley of social stresses, class struggles and nationalistic prejudices, we were confined by compelling forces to the worst areas of big industrial cities. Forces operating in the housing market, in the job market and the deployment of labour generally, pushed us into ghettos, into decaying inner city areas whose inhabitants, already perished if not ground down by decay, not only manifested their prejudices and intolerance, but left us to bear the brunt of social inaction and unplanned urban growth. [18]

Though more fortunate than many other regions in the country, the West Midlands had not fully recovered from almost thirty years of economic and social instability due to two world wars, interconnected by 1930's world economic depression. At the time for Commonwealth immigration, the region was characterised by insufficient and substandard housing, a high level of devastation due to heavy War bombings, and a general state of urgency for industrial reconstruction to meet peace time requirements.

In view of the above, reactions to post-war labour migrants - and anti-immigrant reactions generally were to some extent an expression of the obvious frustrations which inhabitants of Birmingham and other localities throughout the country were experiencing. It is therefore imperative that interpretations of anti-immigrant allegations should be tempered with the knowledge that often 'blaming the victim' is an effective method of appeasement for society's most powerless. From the authorities' point of view, this transferring of blame provides a respite from due remonstrations regarding lack of adequate provision both on the local and national levels.

Section II : WORK EXPERIENCE OF JAMAICANS IN THE WEST  
INDIAN ISLANDS.

Recruitment

In any wave of labour migration from a less prosperous to a more prosperous country, it is not always possible to identify active recruitment by employers, especially where there is no obvious organisation. Often however, migration flows are the result of collaboration by employers, transport agents, government officials in both sending and receiving countries, as well as prior migrants, some of whom are paid by employers to recruit family members and friends from home. The degree to which any of the above groups assumed pre-eminence in recruiting, is conditioned by factors such as the urgency of the labour need in the Core, and the perceived suitability/acceptability of the reserve labour pool.

In commenting on the significance of employers, Piore indicated that:-

It is difficult to distinguish recruitment efforts from the voluminous information that flows back and forth between people "here" and people "there." ... It is, moreover, not always possible to identify the origins of these self-sustained migration streams. But when the origins can be identified, it is invariably the employer who is the active agent. [19]

Analyses of post-war migrations from the Caribbean are based on the premise that the dynamism for labour migrations to the U.K. was consequent on factors emanating from the pace of economic growth in the receiving country with the strategic elements being "employers, not the workers, and the jobs, not the incomes."

In the case of Jamaican migrations to the UK, there was no overt employer recruitment. A number of people from Barbados were recruited by public and private agents, but the majority of Afro-Caribbean people came without formal

recruitment. Table 6 [4] below, bears witness to this fact in the case of the WMID, where all informants said they were recruited either by relatives or friends, and some came on their own - having no contact in the UK:-

TABLE : 6 [4]

**THE ROLE OF PRIOR MIGRANTS IN RECRUITING  
POST WAR JAMAICAN LABOUR MIGRANTS TO THE U.K.  
(Males and Females)**

Informant Males	Helped by	Informant Females	Helped by
1	Friends	1	Husband
2	Sister	2	C'law husband
3	Brother	3	Friends
4	Friend	4	Friends
5	Brother	5	Relatives
6	Brother	6	Husband
7	Bro-in-Law	7	Friends
8	Friends	8	-
9	Bro-in-Law	9	Husband
10	Female Cousin	10	Husband
11	Friend	11	Fiance & his
			uncle
12	Self (YMCA)	12	Husband
13	Uncle	13	Relative
14	Relatives	14	Sister
15	Relative	15	-
16	Niece	16	Husband
17	Friend	17	Husband
18	-	18	Husband
19	Self	19	Friends
20	Friend	20	Husband
21	Friend of father-in-law	21	Friends
22	Self		
23	-		
24	Sister		

Source: West Midland Interview Data - 1984

Of the male respondents, approximately 50% stated that their relatives recruited them (42% being actual blood relatives). Friends were responsible for the recruitment of 29% WMID

male respondents, while the remainder came without any help from the U.K.

As many as 67% female respondents said they were recruited by relatives (79% of whom were spouses - 9 husbands, 1 C's law husband and 1 fiancée), and a slightly lower percentage than the males - 24% - were recruited by friends.

With relatives and peers playing a significant role in the Jamaica/UK worker recruitment exploitation of earlier comprador migrants are expanded into the Core. Not only are the social costs of reproduction borne by people in less developed sending countries, nationals are further exploited in the receiving countries, where such of the social responsibilities of labour replacement/expansion have been placed on prior migrants' shoulders rather than employers. As we saw earlier, the "help" given by pioneer migrants, ranged from remitting monies for transportation costs, and sending out warm clothes, to helping to find suitable accommodation and a job.

Duffield in his work on Indians in West Midlands foundry, found that older more established Indians - many of them prior Colonial War Recruits - operated a recruitment and job finding scheme and appropriated monies from migrant labour recruits for this service. The Fircroft study found that:-

At times the method of recruitment through more experienced coloured workers degenerates into what is sometimes called the 'uncle' system, whereby one coloured worker acts as a recruiting agent and receives a fee in return. In one case a weekly payment of £2 was mentioned and in another a single payment of £3.

They went on to stress that it was difficult to know the extent of this recruitment system, but that:-

... one important firm employing some 350 coloured workers decided to do all its recruitment through the employment exchange, partly, at least, to counteract this system.[20]

No evidence was found in this study to suggest that employers took advantage of informal or illicit worker recruitment practices. Neither has it been ascertained whether Afro-Caribbean worker recruiters and the recruited obtained any form of monetary remuneration/incentive from their employers, if indeed, this type of recruiting practice was engaged in by this group of migrants. It is, however, logical to assume that employers did, in fact benefit. From the Selly Oak study, it would seem that the employees or would-be employees made the payments, as opposed to employers.

Many WHMD respondents were amongst the earliest New Commonwealth labour migrants to arrive in Birmingham. It would seem though, as mentioned previously, that it was through prior knowledge or information both formally and informally relayed while in transit, that migrants made their way to Birmingham. For example, A few, like Mr. Marks headed straight for Birmingham, on his second trip to the UK., as his 'enlistment' period in the country had taught him that Birmingham was very short of manpower. In 1942, after landing at Grenock in Scotland, he spent most of his time in the South West of England, although he was taken to different parts of the country to work at various times. He probably got to know a little about Birmingham when he had to work for a short spell on Cannock Chase. On his demobilisation he spent three months in Jamaica and then returned to the UK to seek employment. Having no relations or friends in this country he therefore had to rely on his own efforts to find suitable work. He made his way to Birmingham because, as he says 'Birmingham ... that was where the work was.'

Others, however, had no specific destination in mind when they left home but ended up in Birmingham because of information they received while actually in transit or at the point of entry to the country. Early pioneers as these are possibly the most exploited labour migrants of any new

wave of immigrants. WMID 'first-comers' had no one to receive them on entry to the UK.

Typical of such pioneers was Mr. Raydon, a shoe-maker who had several people working for him to make shoes - both retail and wholesale in Kingston. He gave up the business and left his wife and five children in 1951 to sail for Britain, because, as he said:-

It used to be in the paper that England need skilled and unskilled workers. Every day the paper used to carry that advertisement .... So I seh, well ... if I come to England, I may get a skilled job on me trade ... and if I don't get that, I can tek a unskilled job.

He landed at the Docks in Liverpool, and the conversation continued thus:-

Why did you make your way to Birmingham? Did you have friends in Birmingham?

As a matter of fact, I heard of an address in London, there was an R.A.F. chap came out and we were talking, and he said he would tell me about an address in London. So I tell him that I have the intension of going to England but I don't know where to go. So he tell me about a address in London, so I seh well I will go there. ... I don't know the people des, but I will go there and see if they can put me up. But when I was on the boat .. out in Ocean there, there was another R.A.F. chap and they were on the deck talking, and they seh "well, anybody going to look a job in England, they would advise them to go to the Midland area because they have a lot of jobs going up there now ... they need a lot of manpower. So I seh well ... I book to go to London, but I's going to change to Birmingham, so ... when the boat come and tek the passenger who going to London, well I didn't tek the ferry boat, I sit down ... an after the ferry boat gone, our boat leave to Liverpool, then I came off at Liverpool.

And from Liverpool you took the train?

Yes, I tek a taxi and went to the station and I ask the station people to sell me a ticket to Birmingham. So he ask me what part of Birmingham, so I told him ... Birmingham! So he said there's New Street and there's Snow Hill Station, which station I want to go. So I told him I'd like to come off at the station nearest to the Town and he said "Oh, New Street ... and tell me what time the train will come.



But you didn't know anybody at all in England? Now did you feel ... when you were on the boat ... you were going to a strange country and you didn't know anybody?

Well ... it's an awful feelings ... but what make you feel good, is that you speak the same language like the people down that you are going to meet. You mightn't speak it as perfect as down, but they will understand you. .... that is the major part, but the other part now, not knowing if you will get anywhere to live or such ... it's an awful feeling.

#### Fitting into a Labour Market Groove

Duffield's work (1988), has rightly dismissed as simplistic, the unqualified claim that Post-War Black labour migrants 'took over jobs which native workers did not want to do'. This is usually proffered in defence of these migrants as a retort to anti-migrant labour abuses. However, while in some cases such statements are truisms, they nevertheless obscure the extensive covert negotiations and manipulations which take place to ensure that these labour migrants fitted pre-assigned grooves. Duffield, using the foundry industry as an example showed that instead of Black immigrants scurrying to replace local whites; as the latter, like water rats rush to leave a perceived sinking/stagnating sector, the foundry industry was actually going through a stage of buoyant automotive transition. This, though symbolically denoting progress for management, effected a virtual deskilling of specific work processes, and became a propelling factor in the exodus of skilled white workers.

It appears to be a common feature in British industrial evolution, that the indigenous groups fail to identify the source of industrial change, processes and strategies. It was pointed out earlier that, when, during the 19th century, the clothing, and textile industries were going through a transitional stage with the introduction of higher levels of mechanisation, Jews were blamed for the perceived decline. They were accused of saturating the market, and through their continued use of extensive division of labour and

manual methods of production, extended the use of archaic technology. These it was felt, inhibited the introduction of new technology and thereby aided British competitors. Similarly, people like Mishan[21] believes that the injection of New Commonwealth labour migrants into Britain's post-war economy deferred the introduction of new technology, to the detriment of the economy. Intriguingly, however, Duffield[22], in his work on Indian foundry workers, regarded this as faulty generalisation, as far as New Commonwealth immigrants were concerned. He stressed that whereas indigenous groups were reluctant to leave their old skilled and semi-skilled jobs in declining industries:-

As a general rule, immigrant workers were absorbed as part of the process of change and modernisation. Their social role was not, as conventional theories suggest, to help maintain backward production methods. Modernisation created many new manufacturing and service jobs - jobs which, although some were not particularly pleasant, had not existed before[23].

While, as was stressed earlier, the above procedure led to de-skilling of established British workers, it also contributed to the deskilling of imported workers. This phenomenon of mechanisation accompanying sectional deskilling, is a recurring feature in capitalist productivity methods. It had been precedenced in the UK, when the hand-loom weavers were deskilled with the introduction of power looms[24]

In both of the above cases, unindustrialised labour was injected into the developing/changing industries. With the advent of scientific management, the process of production was broken down and simultaneously simplified. This strategy was adopted when many industries found themselves short of skilled labour during the immediate post-war years.

Duffield, in commenting on the Foundry industry, points out that this strategy continued to be adopted from the late

1940's through to 1960's. Significantly, however, He indicated that technological change facilitated a connivance of union and management to subjugate Indians. According to him:-

from the late 1940's the foundry unions were able to impose a new skill hierarchy upon the mechanised forms of production then developing. This hierarchy mapped out in advance the social places that Asian workers would be forced to occupy. From this perspective, the arbitrary standards and spurious technical thresholds created by labour bureaucracies and used to oppress workers in general, become an essential and organic mechanism of racial oppression[25]

The initial absence of effective unionism in the foundries - for it was often trade unions which spearheaded regulation and discrimination against migrant labour - allowed a mass implosion of Indians into the industry. This was to operate in juxtaposition with the other traditional controlling practice of directing and dispersing workers - at this period, mainly Afro-Caribbeans.

The regulation of Black Caribbean migrants was achieved by at least a tripartite collaboration, between the Unions, the Government, and Employers.

Trade Unions claimed to be defending their members interests by inhibiting the free flow and settlement of migrant workers. Consequently, through their practices, they were thereby highlighting a major inherent weakness in this form of organised labour, that is, the contradictory role of protecting worker-members against capitalist exploitations, while at the same time - through sectional interests - inhibiting the progress of a section of the proletariat who are regarded as 'out-groups' either because they are the latest recruited, and/or are perceived as not belonging, for multifarious reasons. This point will, however, be elaborated on later.

The government, claiming to be goaded by concerns for, and allegedly working at the behest of 'the people', but in actuality, fearing settlement of Afro-Caribbean labour

migrants, who as British subjects could not be as overtly controlled as foreign workers; engaged itself in debates and practices which were to control and limit the entry of Black labour migrants to Britain. Duffield, in commenting on the government's intervention, stressed that:-

... under the initial conditions of absolute skill shortage, blacks from the colonies were specifically rejected as a means of alleviating the situation.

In emphasising the intense objection to recruiting Black labour, he continued:-

... under growing pressure from the West Indian colonial authorities for measures to ease their unemployment problem, a government departmental working party was set up to examine the suggestion. Its findings were that, due to an alleged lack of suitable skills, the dearth of accommodation and the opposition of indigenous workers, blacks were unsuitable for meeting the existing shortages. .... This antipathy to black immigration was taken further in February 1949 when, following an inter-departmental meeting at the Home Office, moves were initiated to reduce immigration from the colonies at source through the restriction of passports and at the port of entry by demanding 'satisfactory evidence of British nationality'. In June 1950 a Cabinet Meeting endorsed the continuation of these measures and, although only 2,000 West Indians had entered Britain since 1945, the Labour Government raised the issue, since restriction at source was also not being encouraged in Commonwealth countries, of whether or not 'the time had come to restrict the existing right of any British subject to enter the United Kingdom'. [26]

These early anti-black immigration concerns were to eventually express themselves in more sinister and racist forms with every new anti-immigrant legislation since the early 1960's.

Many West Midlands employers, the final part of that tripartite collaboration found, to their consternation, that their recruiting ability was controlled and curtailed both by National Government anti-Black immigrant legislations, as

well as by the practices of local trade unions, a point which will be elaborated on later.

The tripartite anti-Black immigrant collaboration which developed in response to the injection of New Commonwealth immigrants, was to lead to the political institutionalisation of racial oppression of Black people. In explaining this 'racial oppression' commentators often ignore or fail to give due credence to the interactive relationship between the projected institutional and personal oppression and the radicalism of the oppressed. When this is done, even though traditional forms of radical expressions are identified, analyses of Black workers responses are rarified and isolated from the unjust stimuli. These forms of resistance are attributed to the 'alienness' of Black people and peculiar to them.

Additionally, overt forms of resistance are magnified at the expense of less obvious but possibly more immediately effective attempts of 'self protection' and survival strategies - in the face of a repressive framework. The following section aims to identify these less obvious forms of individual self-assertive measures.

### Employment Experiences

If we accept Bosanquet's and Doeringer's (1973) definition of disadvantaged workers as being:-

employed in enterprises where wages are low, working conditions are poor, employment is often unstable, and opportunities for on-the-job training and advancement are severely limited[27]

then scrutiny of available data on Black labour migrants, certainly portrays a picture of perpetual disadvantage.

On entering any labour market, most immigrants, especially those from a rural background, could be classified as having

a lack of awareness and, indeed, commitment to the specific types of work available in an industrial society. As mentioned previously, for many, this migration to foreign labour markets must be seen as pragmatic bids to raise money for economic enhancement back home. To some extent, therefore, in the earliest stages of migration - it is 'a job' and importantly, 'the remunerations' from it, which are of greatest importance. This does not mean that migrant labourers made conscious decisions to accept the worst type of jobs available in the receiving country. What it does mean is that they were usually ignorant of the specific labour market dynamics; many believing they would be able to obtain the kinds of work they did at home.

When, however, they were faced with the realities of the types of work available to them in the UK, it is possible that - in the short term while 'return' was still a viable alternative - the adverse effects of alienation and anomie can be counter-balanced by the very temporary nature of their existence. For example, unlike British indigenous workers the migrant can suspend notions of work related prestige and job satisfaction until returning home. Further, and of more lasting relevance, is the fact that even while still in the Core country, he/she can gain prestige if the focus is removed to the periphery and centred on the actual or anticipated material achievement through work proceeds. Thus, it is not uncommon to hear individuals refer to their 'many acres of land back home', 'ten apartment house back home' or to the fact that they 'come off better table' than someone who is perceived to be of 'lower class origin back home, yet in the UK, appear to have done comparatively better than the commentator. Until 'mere existence' begins to take on a settlement nature, the very transitory nature of the migrant's existence, often necessitate a curtailment or deferralment of social requirements and obligations in the periphery as well as the core. It is this ability to defer gratification which contributes to their elasticity, rendering them more suited

than indigenous groups, to meet immediate needs in the labour market.

This point it should be emphasised, has both positive and negative aspects. On the one hand a more relatively mobile group of worker who through deferred gratification can be utilised more easily in 'creative' production manipulation, contributes to their attractiveness. On the other hand, their very entry to the labour market peripheralises them in terms of the quality of work they are made to do, and the fact that they usually fail to obtain protection which is often obtainable through worker solidarity. Further, integral to most accusations about immigrant groups during their pre-settlement period, is the belief that they will inevitably form a cheap source of labour and compete against existing indigenous groups for jobs. This argument finds greatest expression in localities where, due to declining or transitional industries, fears - based on real or imagined factors - are ever present. This is usually the reason proffered by local worker organisations for the pariahisation of immigrant workers.

Black post-War migrant labourers found what to them must have been a strangely contrasting situation. On the one hand, they knew jobs existed abundantly in the West Midlands region; the media was constantly bemoaning labour shortages, as exemplified in the following Daily Herald's article in 1955:-

There is no way of controlling the influx of coloured people. Besides, Birmingham's 1500 trades needs them. There are still 48,000 jobs vacant in the city...

... there was recently trouble at nearby West Bromwich over the engagement of an Indian bus-conductor. But at work, with very few exceptions, the newcomers have been accepted without resentment by their white colleagues.

Possibly this is because they have mostly filled the lower-paid jobs (average wage £7 8/-), (£7.25p), and have not seriously invaded the skilled £15-a-week strata. [28]

Despite labour shortage, however, and the close access to skilled labour market, Black workers would seek one of the lowest paid jobs, only to be told there were no vacancies. I asked Mr. Marks the returned War Recruit, whether on his return he looked for a job himself or whether he was helped. He replied:-

That's the difference from now ... you see, you (one) could go into a factory and knock on the door and ask if there is any vacancies, and if they fancy your face they employ you, but that's where a lot of aggravation comes in.

(In the case of a Black person)... They say no, they look at your face and they see your colour some of the factories they just put the shutters down. There use to be a ... what you call ... like a little office and you go up there and there is a girl at the office and you say "is there any vacancy please?" They say Oh yes, could you come down please ... and when I go there .. the girl who was there said sorry there is no vacancy and I took the paper and I said that's your vacancy ... I always take my paper with me I said this vacancy hasn't been took ... but you don't want to employ me because I'm coloured and they try to ... they make a lot of fuss about that you know ... because you see, this Racial Act never come out at that time yet so we had a hard time.

It took me about .... I would say nearly four weeks because by coming here I had to settle down you know ... to get started again ... find my way around ... takes me about a month.

It was Delta. .... We use to sort the shells out you know ... because we use to get a lot of live ammunition ... live shells come amongst the empty shells. It's dangerous but we got to (be) careful. We had magnet .... what the magnet does is told you that they are live you see and we know the empty one that was done different from the live

(No one got) injured ... not as far as I know because they make sure that what they taught you to do you do it right. (If you come across a live one) they take them out and put them aside because if they goes in the furnace they will blow the place up.

I stopped in the job for about ... I think about six months because you could get work at the time ... but as I said there wasn't much money in those and then I went and work for I.C.I.



The money wasn't much.... Between £8 to £9 every time I would get ..... It wasn't much.

Having been a "good" shoe-maker in Jamaica, Mr. Raydon had hoped to be able to continue with his trade if at all possible, indeed, he had prepared himself for that eventuality, consequently he stressed:-

When I was coming here, I made two pairs of shoes as a sample. I seh well, if I come to England and I can get a job on the trade, that would be nice, because I know that already, so I'm going to make two pairs of shoes on mi own, take it with mi and travel around with it and show the factory ... or the boss .... and tell dem is I make it from start to finish, and if he doubt mi, I can buy the material off him, and him give mi the privilege to sit down in front of him and make it on mi own, so that he can tell dat I make it.

I went to one factory, (dat was in Balsall Heath, and I went to one in Northampton). Well they took it in to the boss, or foreman ... I don' know who. Anyway, one man came out ... him ask mi if I make the shoes. So he seh he don't understand when I seh I make the shoes, what part of the shoes I make. I seh ... well I complete the shoes from start to finish. He said "You complete the shoes from start to finish?" I said "yes". He said, he don' understand, but he will try mi out, so he give mi a job and him will start mi out at £10.00 a week... Because a person dat can complete a shoes... he couldn't pay him, because there's so many job on di shoes, because to design a shoes, date one job, to cut the upper is another job, to stitch di upper is another job .... and so on, as he was explaining to me, so he couldn't understand me when I seh I complete the shoes, but he will give mi a job and start mi off at £10.00 a week.

Well, at di time a get di job up here ... Accles & Pollock ... an it was di same £10.00 every week. So I seh ... well, I'm working, and maybe I leave dis job now and take dat one and they don' keep me on long. So I'll be giving away certain for uncertain, so I never went back to them.

To take the job in Northampton would have necessitated de-skilling, and a move to an area different from his initial residence area, with all the inconvenience involved therein. It would also have rendered tremendous frustration when compared to his previous craftsmanship, he would have had to

perform non-creative tasks such as was involved in the division of shoe-making labour. Contrasted with this, was the fact that he was already doing a semi-skilled job, though outside of his specialism area; it would, nevertheless, gain him experience in a different type of work. Secondly, the pay for both jobs was the same. This informant therefore decided to continue doing foundry work at Aocles & Pollock until he retired, having worked a total of 33 years for the same Company.

Like the above, several other WMID informants found jobs for themselves, either by actually turning up at the place of employment or looking in the newspapers, or were aided by earlier migrants. The majority of WMID appeared to have turned to the Labour Exchanges as a last resort. This could either have been because they resorted to traditional 'home' methods of seeking work, or, as was indicated by a few informants, there was deep distrust of Labour Exchanges as many often felt they were sent to jobs below their capabilities. Tables : 6 [5] below, reveals the extent to which WMID informants relied on the initiatives of their peers, relatives, or their own to help them find a job:-

TABLE 6 [5]  
METHOD OF OBTAINING FIRST JOB

	Men	Women
Friends	5	6
Relatives	7	5
Own Initiative	9	6
Labour Exchange	2	2

Source: WMID - 1984

'Relatives' (29%) and 'own initiative' (37.5%) were the two most significant ways in which WMID male informants obtained their first jobs. For the Women both 'friends' and 'own

initiative' seemed to have been mutually significant, both accounting for 29%. What is most noteworthy, however, is the fact that only 8% men and 9.5% women said they obtained their first employment through the Labour Exchange.

Tables 6 [6] and 6 [7] below reveals the level of labour mobility amongst WMID informants throughout their working lives in the UK up to the time of interview:-

TABLE 6 [6]

## MEN

Length of Time in First Job	Length of Time in Any One Job	Number of Places Worked
All working life	19 years	1
One year	14 "	4
3 years	12 "	3
6 weeks	21 "	2
All working life	-	1
2 yrs. 9 months	16 yrs. 3 mths.	3
3 months	6 "	-
1 year +	16 "	4
2yrs. 6mths		3
6 months	12 years	2
6 weeks	14 "	6
6 months	12 "	6
10 days	18 "	3
11 weeks	18 "	6
6 months	10 "	5
All working life	-	1
9 months	28 years	3
9 months	-	3
4 months	13 years	3
4 months	9 "	8
1 year	2 "	1
All working life	32 years	1
Info. unobtainable	-	-
1 year +	19 years	3

Source: WMID 1984

For males, 58% (14) informants changed their first job within the first year. Of this, 37.5% (9), changed within six months of starting work. 17% (4) had only worked one place since entering the UK labour market.

TABLE 6 [7]

## WOMEN

Length of Time in first job	Length of Time in any one job	Number of Places worked
4 months	17 years	3
1 month	20 "	-
3 months	5 "	8
3 months	-	10
2 years	6 "	3*
6 weeks	12 "	5
1+ year	9 "	5
8 months	10 1/2 years	4
3 years	-	6
17 days approx.	Self employed	2
3 months	10+ years	6
5 weeks	8 1/2 years	4
6 months	16 years	4
18 months	9 "	3
4-5 years	18 years	7
1 year +	3 years	4
8 yrs. 6 mths.	10 years	2
8 years	12 years	3
7 months	5 yrs. 7 mths.	4
Info. unobtained	-	-
5 weeks	14 years	3

Source: WHMD 1984

For Women informants, 57% (12), changed jobs within the first year of entry to the UK labour market. Of this, 43% (9), changed jobs within six months of starting work.

The figures above reveals that the decision to terminate employment in first job (whether employer or self generated), was activated earlier for women than men.

For both men and women, informants admitted length of time in any one job, seems to suggest that after the initial quick changes, labour mobility stabilised. Even the two male informants who claimed to have worked in eight places, stayed for 12 years and 9 years respectively in one job. No less than 67% (16) male informants stayed in one job for 10

years and over. None of the women informants had worked with only one Employer (as opposed to 170 males who had). Nevertheless, 480 (10), had worked with one company for 10 years and more.

Rex and Tomlinson[e] in their 1977 study of Handsworth, found that illness was largely responsible for informants in their sample leaving a job. They found, however, that 'amongst West Indians 40.6 per cent, and amongst the Asians 53.7 per cent of the unemployed had been made redundant as compared with only 29.5 per cent of the whites'. This meant that employer generated terminations were more common amongst Black migrant labours in the West Midlands at that time. This contrasts strongly with the reasons given below by WMID for leaving their first job - all of which would have been prior to 1977:-

**TABLE 6 [8]**

---

**Expressed Cumulative Reasons for leaving first job  
Man**

---

Made redundant  
Got better paid job  
Felt for a Change  
Became ill with influenza  
Wanted to go to College - took job with better working hours  
Sacked because he couldn't cope with the cold weather  
Obtained a better job  
Left because of compulsory Sunday work  
Sacked for not working on Saturdays  
Not enough money  
Not enough money  
To follow own skilled trade  
Problems over work  
Unpleasant working conditions in foundry  
Pay too low

---

Source: WMID 1984

TABLE 6 (9)

---

Expressed Cumulative Reasons for leaving first job  
Women

---

Work too hard - had to scrub floor with hands  
 Expecting a baby  
 To set up own shop  
 Expecting a baby  
 Wanted a Change  
 The work was unpleasant and hard  
 To start own business  
 Got married and became pregnant  
 Firm leaving area  
 To obtain further training  
 Job unsuitable - too dirty  
 To seek better paying job  
 Didn't like the job  
 Disagreement with employers  
 Got burnt and was then dismissed  
 Got pregnant  
 Couldn't adjust  
 Seeking more experience: Also heard that people who work on  
 hand-press get heart attack, she therefore decided 'not to  
 wait for the attack'

---

Source: WNID - 1984

---

Apart from the two reasons (asterisked), which seemed too  
 ambiguous to determine actual origin of the termination  
 (employee or employer), by far, the majority of work  
 terminations were claimed to be self generated. In the case  
 of male informants this was in the ratio of 11:2, as  
 compared to a ratio of 15:2 self termination for women.

On reflection, the difference in the termination sources,  
 identified between Rex and Tomlinson's study and WNID, is  
 not so surprising. The majority of Afro-Caribbean labour  
 migrants entered the UK before the mid 1960's, and largely  
 during a period when the economy was buoyant and with an  
 unemployment rate lower than the national average. It meant  
 therefore, that employees could 'pick and choose' relatively  
 freely. In explaining this contemporarily rare situation,  
 one informant said:-

In 1955 when I came here, you didn't need anybody to help you find a job, that was easy. You'd go to the Exchange to sign on, you get your Card and they could send you to twenty five jobs if you wanted, because there was more jobs around than men.

This state of full employment, was undoubtedly advantageous for the workers. It meant that they were able to change their jobs relatively easy if they were dis-satisfied, and this they did. This apparently advantageous position for the worker, must be analysed more closely, however. For example, while labour mobility, from one job to another, was enhanced; it has been argued above that the extent to which Jamaicans - or most other New Commonwealth migrant labourers - could have used this to gain access to comparatively better jobs in terms of skills, pay, and to a large extent, working conditions, was very limited.

Possibly the greatest advantage which a full-employment situation afforded these labour migrants was that they were able to protect themselves against the most overt forms of anti-migrant labour or racist abuses and sabotage from employers and other fellow-workers. They could walk away! Mr. Sylvester below explains one such occasion when he walked away!:-

Why I left Bulpitt? ... I discovered that a white chap (who) was working with me .. was getting about £4.00 a week more than me... so I left the job straight away!

Me and him was working on what they call a de-greasing plant... So I was on one tank and he was on the other tank, and I have got over four years there, and dis white man only have about six weeks.. and ... one Friday evening I ask him ... I says to him ... Don't think I'm jealous about your wages, but here is my pay slip, I would like to see yours. I show him mine, and I see him look a bit doubtful, so I know dat something did wrong ... And when him show mi his pay slip, him seh, 'Mike, don't let mi down, but it's not fair.'

So I promise dat I wouldn't let him down, so I look at di pay slip, and I see di hours dat him done, and I do more hours than him, and him was still ... about four pounds more than me! So I says, right. ... an I never want in di Saturday, I never want in di Monday, and I

drive to Aables and Pollock, an I get a job jus like dat!

So when I come back an give mi notice at di factory, they have a shock, for they never know dat I would leave... an asking mi why do I leave? But I did promise not to let the guy down, so I never say nothing at all, I just say I want my Card.

I asked Mr. Sylvester whether it was because he had become suspicious why he had asked to see his work-mate's pay slip, to which he replied:-

Yes, I did ... he was one of those chap that ... some days he comes in an he work one day ... don't come the other day ... and sometime he tak all two, three days off a week! But dat particular week ... he did do a fair amount of a week's work, so that's the week I could catch him to compare with my wages.

In those days ... under Conservative government, your wages was yu private business ... gaffers used to give a little back-hand deal .. It was really corruption in those days ... But since di Labour government comes in and Union get a bit more strength .. when a gaffer quins to give yu a rise, him haffe giva everybody ... which I think dat is fair ... but in those days it was all wrong.

For some who walked out of their jobs on discovering discrimination, it may undoubtedly have been a case of 'out of the frying pan into the fire', but as long as the possibility was there, they kept walking until something relatively satisfactory was found. This form of worker defence and individual militancy was certainly not A-typical to MMID. They have been used by workers all over the world who, find themselves on the one hand disenfranchised from organised labour protection, while on the other hand, are able to obtain alternative employment.

Decisions to 'walk' when one met with discrimination could be regarded as passive resistance of a kind which is more concerned with selfish motives, as opposed to changing the status-quo to benefit others in the long run. On the other hand, such actions must be viewed as often the only alternative left to a powerless, group of workers who are



usually unable to call on the protection of trade unions, despite having membership, and importantly, despite having a significant degree of worker radicalism which had been engendered long before entry to the UK - a point to be discussed later in this chapter.

TABLE 6 [10]

**FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL TRAINING, NEW SKILLS AND PROMOTION  
ACQUIRED IN THE UK.**

	Males N = 24	Females N = 21
<b>In-Service Provision</b>		
Any Training acquired through INSET	6	10
Professional Training or skills acquired	0	3
New skills acquired on the job	16	9
Promotion gained	6	5
<b>External Provision</b>		
External Training acquired	1	2
New Skills acquired external to paid work	1	4
No form of In-Service Training given	7	11
No external training acquired	22	14

Source: West Midlands Interview Data

From the above, 48% of the women interviewed indicated that they had acquired training through INSET (In-Service Training). While 52% said they had received no form of In-Service Training. Of those who had been trained internally, 14% (3) of the sample said their training gained through INSET was of a professional nature, mainly nursing and nursing related. Approximately 43% said they had acquired new skills since working in the UK, and almost 24% said they had gained promotion in their work.

Informants were further questioned about training and skills they had acquired external to their work. Of the women, approximately 10% said they had been trained externally while 67% said they had received no such training.

Of the male informants, 25% had acquired INSET, though none of this was of a professional nature as against 24% professionally trained women. Approximately 67% said they had acquired new skills on the job and 25% said they had received internal promotion. 4% had obtained external training and the same number 4% said they had received new skills external to their paid work. Of the total male sample, no less than 29% said they had received no form of in-service training and approximately 92% of the male informants have received no external training of any kind.

#### Natural Empathy? - Jamaicans and Trade Unions

Studies on the process of unionisation amongst workers often focus on the actual organisational establishment, the rhetorician, or the incorporation of members from a numbers perspective. Rarely, if ever, is attention paid to the actual process of awareness raising. In the case of Jamaicans - as is no doubt the same with workers in many developing countries, it is necessary to begin at the stage where the actual awareness raising takes place. This is crucial in an understanding of how a group of migrant labourers from a largely un-unionised background, is able to respond positively to this form of worker organisation.

Mrs. Tallock, who we will meet in Chapter 6, was initiated to trade unionism when she was 16 years old, and was working as a maid. She was intermittently self-employed, both in Jamaica and the U.K., yet the graphic enthusiasm with which she relays her experience and commitment to trade unions, is useful in understanding the awareness raising process of this 'ordinary' worker:-

I remember the uprising ... when people become brave... if di people in Kingston ... had had di experience, they would have managed better. Things would have happened better.

But yu know, when you were locked in! .... Like you were locked up in a box and somebody jus come and didn't know somebody alive in dere and lif di lid ... an deh si you and frighten and let yu out? Dat's what happen to di people. Because, dis one man come along (Mustamente)... an di firs ting he start to do, he start to seek fi di wages fi de people. He start to show dem dat yu can live better than dis ... (Mustamente) really make an important time change in Jamaica. Marcus Garvey was di firs one who was trying to find di betterment fi di Black race (But) Mustamente bring di people up to standard dat deh could stan up fi deh right. Deh could stand up and tell yu 'well, I'm not sticking for dat.' But firs time deh wouldn't say nothing because deh was afraid.

It's only when Mustamente come about in Jamaica before wages just gradually improve ... and di people get scared ... so if yu working with dem and you are a good worker an yu seh to dem, well I'm going to bring yu Union, deh quickly says "Well, how much more do you want?" You can tell dem any amount, deh pay ... cause deh was scared!

I asked Mrs. Fallock whether she was a Union member at that time, to which she replied:-

No, we weren't in no Union! Nobody was in no Union, but as di Union come about, after '38, you know, ... (The Employers) would seh to you 'Are you a Labour Party Member?' (The respondent would say) "Yes". Deh don't give you di job! ... so I'd seh (threateningly) "yu have di work ... an alright ... alright ... I'm going back to Town!" By di time yu reach di gate deh call yu back ... yu actually black-mailing dem ... 'cause deh get scared, for dis ting deh didn't know about. An den everybody start to get brave an talk back ... for (before) yu wouldn't talk ... yu open yu mouth deh jus throw you out!

In most developing countries there is no clear demarkation line between proletarianised and non-proletarianised worker. As was evidenced in Tables 5.2 and 5.3, as many NMID informants claimed they were fully self-employed as compared with partly self-employed, which meant that their wages were made up by working for a private employer in one activity,

while at the same time engaging in their own money raising activity. Others, on the other hand, confessed to working intermittently solely for themselves and then for a private employer. What this suggests is that they, like the fully proletarianised and unionised workers, would have first hand experience of the factors which forge working class solidarity and unionism. This contradicts the generally believed allegation that economic migrants from poorer countries come from a largely un-unionised background and are therefore fodder for undermining the principles and practices of 'good trade unionism'.

While from an experiential point migrant labourers such as MMID may not have engaged in union activities - either because they were precluded by nature of their self employment or the un-unionised work they engaged in, nevertheless, early awareness raising in the periphery - though dormant, can and do become activated in the core - despite being removed by time and space.

What is rarely acknowledged by trade unions is the fact that Black labour implosion to core economies affords a continuation and intensification of their exploitation rather than a beginning. The internationalisation of capitalist means and methods of production exploits third world workers from afar. From the MMID we have seen that many labour migrants from Jamaica were either self-employed or semi-proletarianised. Consequently their incorporation into the core makes many of them more vulnerable in that in their fully proletarianised state, they can only rely on an employer; (though in the UK this was somewhat cushioned by State Welfare provision.)

Another factor which is rarely given credence is that many Black labour migrants themselves, whether from the Caribbean or the Asian sub-continent, have a history of labour organisation. For example, Craft Unions had been in existence in Jamaica from the late 19th century; A notable

one being the Painters Union (1907), of which Marcus Garvey was a member.[29]

The 1930's, being a period of intense economic depression throughout the world, was characterised by large scale public disturbances - in the Caribbean as elsewhere. Some of these were spontaneous responses of unorganised workers others were actions through organised trade unions. They were, however, mainly caused by poor social and economic conditions.

In response to the workers call for action to redress their social and economic hardship, the British government set up a Royal Commission chaired by Lord Moyne, and membered by. Walter Citrine : General Secretary of the TUC. This tended to promote the view of official acceptance of trade unions in the colonies. By 1943 trade unions were legalised and peaceful picketing allowed. They were granted legal protection from action for damages caused by strikes. On behalf of the TUC, Citrine administered financial support. TUC scholarships and educational courses were offered. Despite the above, the TUC's involvement in the Caribbean is seen to have been divisive, especially the way in which it worked closely with the Colonial government to 'separate industrial disputes from political action'.[30]

The above is representative of a tradition of Unionism amongst the group of Caribbean labour migrants now termed 'New Commonwealth' citizens. Many of the officials were very educated and experienced in Union procedures and given the opportunity, could have contributed to the development of trade unions in the UK. Like the British Labour Party, they had a tradition of influencing national politics through actual participation through the ballot box, and again could have influenced national politics, rather than sectional union interests.

They were conscious of the advantages of intra-union participation and worker solidarity both nationally and internationally. All these were positive attributes which could have been grasped by the British trade union movement to improve the lot of workers generally. This tradition of Union involvement has continued in the U.K. as is evidenced both from the national as well as WMID figures, as set out below:-

**TABLE 6 [11]**  
**JAMAICANS INVOLVEMENT IN TRADE UNIONS**  
**- THE WEST MIDLANDS**

	men N = 24	women N = 21
Union Members	22	18
Union Officers	3	None
Knowledge of other Afro-Car.Officers	12	7
Not Union members	1	-
N/A = Information not to hand	1	2

Source: West Midlands Interview Data (WMID)

Approximately 88% of WMID male informants admitted to being members of trade Unions, while only 12% were officers. When questioned further, it transpired that these 'officers', were Shop Stewards, and as such were more worker representatives rather than trade union officers. About 50% of WMID male respondents claimed knowledge of other Afro-Caribbean 'officers'. It seems, however, that many of these respondents were referring to the same few people.

Of female informants, 90% claimed membership of a trade union, yet none were officers. About 37%, however, claimed they knew of Afro-Caribbean workers who were also Officers. When questioned about the under-representation of Union Officers amongst Afro-Caribbean workers, many, without elaborating, suggested that they had either not put themselves forward for selection, or that they were not

elected by other members. One informant in particular, stressed that she worked in a hospital during the nights, and somehow, as a night staff, she never seemed to get any information about the Union, and certainly had no prior knowledge of meetings and elections.

Perpetuating An Error Through Phrasology : British Trade Unions and Black Workers - A Historical Review

Trade union studies in the UK can usually be divided into two broad approaches; firstly, a Race Relations Approach, based on the premise that British society is innately ethnocentric and racist and that trade unions, like all other institutions within the political economy are inevitably permeated with these. This view maintains that it is only by catheterising itself through education, and more importantly, legislative measures to deter discrimination, can black people ever obtain equity with the wider society.[31]

The second approach could be termed a Class Structural Approach. This is based on the premise that it is the requirements of a capitalist economic system, which encourages the formation and exploitation of various strata within the society with Black people forming at least the lowest if not a sub-stratum. Importantly, what is inherent in this system is the apparent need for each stratum to parasitically relate to those below them for their own well-being. Thus, writers such as Castles and Cosacke[32], and Robert Miles[33] emphasises that the class perspective is germane to an understanding of the position of black people in the European Trade Union Movement.

In the same vein, Lunn, in criticising the race relations approach, stressed:-

Much of the 'race relations' literature is ill-conceived, precisely because it concentrates on that perspective. This focus distorts an understanding and analysis of the position of black ... immigrants in British society (because) it presupposes that any

immigrant group is only significant in their responses to situations defined by racial or ethnic characteristics, that is, in situations involving racism and discrimination. This concentration detracts from other, possibly more fundamental, economic and social dimensions of their experience and from a meaningful analysis of the ideological role of racial categorisation. [34]

Writers like Miles [35] would argue that since it is through the phenomenon of migrant labour that the articulation and reproduction of racism takes place, by analysing the place of migrant labour in capitalist reproductions and thereafter examine the targeted migrant group in terms of political and ideological perspectives, a clearer understanding can be gained.

Unfortunately, both the race relations and the classist approaches are too often treated as mutually exclusive and opposing each other; yet most black people have no problem in recognising that from an experiential standpoint, both the above encapsulates the reality of their existence in Britain. What is probably more significant too, is the belief that racism is their worst enemy - with capitalism purely being a vehicle through which this gains expression and is channelled.

Anti-immigrant responses were characteristic of organised labour in the UK, long before the 1940's. Often, when the middle class parliamentarians passed legislations to keep out immigrants/aliens, they claimed to be doing this at the behest of the working classes. Though often cloaking middle class interests, this claim was, to some extent legitimated through various TUC's appeal to Parliament in this regard.

In 1921 it was estimated that over 250 West African seamen were stranded in British Ports and living in a state of 'semi-starvation'. The Seamen union was thought to be at the root of such of the social distress felt by these people, in that they prevented black men obtaining jobs if there was a white person out of work.



A Commentator on the Cardiff situation, P.Cecil Lewis,[36] suggested that:-

A studied and deliberate policy had been instituted to deprive them (Black Britons) of their nationality and the privileges attached thereto.

Attacks against seamen perceived to be 'foreign' were often cloaked in racist verbal abuse. The Journal for Seamen published an article on 7th May, 1930, in which they wrote:-

It is no use men trying to persuade us that the question of colour does not enter into national consideration; it does and very seriously. We had growing up in our midst a population, not of young Arabs, but of half-castes, which is undesirable in the extreme, and no prating of goodwill towards men of colour will alter this fact.[37]

1940s A period of contradiction existed. Rearmament for War necessitated taking on black workers. Fryer emphasised that 'In industry the colour bar was virtually total. Only in the early forties, when their labour was needed for the war effort, could black workers get jobs in British factories; and even then there was often resistance from employers and white employees alike. The colour bar also meant according to Kenneth Little writing in 1943:- 'the refusal of lodgings, refusal of service in cafes, refusal of admittance to dance halls, etc., shrugs, nods, whispers, comments, etc., in public, in the street, in trams and in buses'.[38]

Trade unions have consistently failed to defend black workers and have often been in the forefront of anti-black practices. Thus a Study by Greater London Trade Union Resource Unit stressed that:-

The experience of black trade unionists within the labour movement is often a reflection of the experience of black workers within employment as a whole. Black people are more likely than white people to be unemployed, or if in work to be clustered at the lower ends of the scale of pay and power. As trade union members, even though a higher proportion of black

people join unions than white people, they are less likely to be represented at senior levels of union structure, and their particular struggles are often ignored.[39]

John Wrench stressed some major ways in which he believes the trade union movement has failed its Black members. These include lack of acceptance on the part of trade union leaders of the fact that their Black members were facing problems which were essentially different from their white counterparts, and that solving them demanded different practices and policy implementation. Shop stewards and union officials are also accused of discrimination, and outright racism, and of refusing to take action against perpetrators or support aggrieved Black workers in their actions against adverse treatment. Wrench further accused trade union officials of:-

A general lack of awareness of the issues of race and equal opportunity and the particular circumstances of ethnic minority members, which may not manifest itself as racism but in effect lessens the participation of black members in the union.[40]

Until 1955 both the General Council and the TU Congress appeared to totally ignore the whole area of immigration, discrimination and racism. 1955 was, however, the watershed because in this year, Congress resolved for the first time, a general condemnation of racial discrimination. It appears, however, that this move, like that of the Seamen's Union in 1905, was borne out of a desire to incorporate in order to control. They were concerned that immigrants would form a pool of cheap labour, thereby undermining trade union bargaining power.

Despite the positive action in 1955, it must be stressed that the Trade Unions - through their mouthpiece, the TUC was at best strangely silent and at worst openly obstructive during the immigrant aligning and legislatively restricting 1960's through early 1970's. Initially, the general TUC's response to racism within the Union was that this 'would best be overcome by immigrants increasing their efforts to

integrate'.[41] In the same vein, the TUC opposed both the 1965 Anti-Discriminatory Race Relations Bills, and the 1968 Race Relations Act, stressing that 'voluntary organisations such as itself and the CBI should supervise such integration rather than the State'.[42] In the same year, however, they supported the Commonwealth Immigration Bill - under the Labour government, while they did not speak out against the 1971 Tory Immigration Act. The latter Bill and Act were devised to restrict entry of Black people to the UK.

This plea for non-government intervention (albeit, in matters of race relations), is completely different from the traditional union view of the role and effectiveness of governments in bringing about change. This belief in the government as change generators, through the legislature, is emphasised by the fact that the TUC has aligned itself closely to the Labour Party and continues to support it financially.

In 1973 the Congress approved a resolution to call on a future Labour government to repeal the 1971 Immigration Act. This Act was never repealed. However, by approving this resolution, Congress was in actuality recognising the effects of racism on black people, and that the Unions and more importantly, the government, rather than the disadvantaged groups, had an obligation to assist in eradicating racism. Two years later the TUC established An Equal Rights Sub-Committee and a Race Relations Advisory Committee. Previously, race relations concerns were dealt with by the International Department implying that the problems and solutions were external to Britain, rather than emanating from internal policies and practices.

From the late 1970s through to early 1980's Congress took on a more positive anti-racist stance as a result of the National Front's political activities as evidenced in local union activities and electoral victories. Through the publication of their Black Workers Charter in 1981, the TUC Workbook on Racism in 1983, and the TUC/CRE Code of Practice

for Trade Unions in 1984, they appear to have accepted their responsibility to stand against anti-immigrant and racist discriminations.

By failing to utilise the imported expertise of migrant labour trade unionists, British trade unions may have inadvertently inhibited progress of trade unionism, and have stimulated working-class cleavages.

In admonishing US Black people to embrace socialism, Baraka (1970) cautions them by stressing:-

It is critical that we always keep in mind that we are struggling to liberate ourselves as people and also to bring about socialism. ... We make an error when we posit our struggle, or render ourselves invisible within phraseology describing the essential struggle ... as one between the working masses and the ruling class, with no further revelation of the essential racism of ... society[43].

For the majority of Black people in Britain, the above is no less than a reality of their positions. Any concessions and changes in Union policy today in support of black workers must be seen as being achieved either because of the Unions bid to incorporate, in an attempt to further subjugate, or importantly, through the struggles of Black Workers themselves. These unions have consistently failed to examine existing rules and procedures which are discriminatory to black workers.

Black workers have been forcefully inscpulated within the labour market, being restricted to unskilled and specific types of work - predominantly in the manufacturing and service sector. As mentioned, previously, however unlike most Asian groups, they were consciously interspersed throughout a particular firm or firms. Consequently, WMID respondents described the ethnic composition of their work colleagues as follows:-

TABLE 6 [12]

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF WORK COLLEAGUES

Ethnic groupings of fellow workers	Males	Females
Afro-Caribbean	3	4
European (mainly British)	6	6
Indians and Pakistanis	4	-
Even mix of all above groups	7	10
Others: Africans	1	0

Source: West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Although the above represents a fairly even ethnic mix of fellow workers. It was significant that although a small number of respondents admitted mixing with the various groups during break times at work. All the women respondents, and the majority of males (apart from one who is married to an English), admitted to mixing only with Afro-Caribbean people, and predominantly Jamaicans, during their out of work leisure times. This, however, is characteristic of the ethnically insapulated situation in which most Black people in Britain live.

This segregation of immigrants from the receiving society - whether voluntary or forced, serves the purpose of marginalising the newcomers, particularly from the rest of the working classes and aids ethnic cleavage. Introversion is reinforced through work segregation of immigrants into certain primary stages in individual factories. John Bodnar, in his study on 'Immigration and Industrialisation' in the U.S.A., stress that contrary to assumptions by historians that diverse groups of immigrants and migrants eventually discard their pre-migration behaviour and eventually emerge prosperous and integrated into the large community, recent studies indicate that this is not the case. He stressed that 'persistence rather than the destruction of pre-migration cultures' is the norm, even though social mobility is achieved. As is emphasised later,

the 'marginalisation' or as Barrera terms it, 'the Colonisation' of immigrant labour serves specific functions in the accumulation of capital, to the employers advantage - to the extent of splitting the working class and preventing solidarity. Of course, eventually cross-cultural class alignments can and do take place - these are often with other disadvantaged minority groups and are usually survival strategies - akin to Jessie Jackson's 'Rainbow Coalition' or the 'Black Umbrella'.

Bodnar,[44] in his study of Steelton, US found that although in the main polarisation of different ethnic/ cultural/class groups continued, there appeared to be an over-coming of ethnic and racial divisions between Southern Europeans and Blacks in the Mill, and a strengthening of working class solidarity. Thus, with time, he believed 'accommodation' more nearly explained immigrant behaviour than cultural persistence, destruction or upward advancement.

Often, however, such alignments follow a 'forced self recognition, through introversion. Thus in the UK, the concept of 'Afro-Caribbean' or 'West Indian', has specific and more significant meaning that Jamaican, Barbadian, Nevisian, or indeed does Black - as opposed to 'West Indian' or 'Asian' in confrontation with white racism.

### Conclusion

Anti-black sentiments have been greatest during periods of economic decline or in transitional stages in industrial development. These are often viewed as anti-migrant labour sentiments, thus 'legitimised' as workers attempt to safeguard themselves against capitalist exploitation through the phenomenon of imported labour.

This argument would gain support when one studies the general response of Trade Unions - a vehicle through which the exploited working classes have historically attempted to

protect themselves against the worst ravages of capitalism - have consistently failed to defend Black working class migrant labourers, as the most exploited workers. Ironically, it is overt manifestations of this sectional exploitation, which Geschwender blames for continued working class factions. According to him:-

Black workers are ... kept in the least desirable jobs. This tends to create a perception in white workers that they have a vested interest in racism and the status quo.

....Racism divides white and black workers and contributes to the weakness of the proletariat and the perpetuation of the system that exploits it. (Even) Blacks who are not members of the proletariat ... must confront racism and are deprived by it.[45]

Of course, it would be gross neglect not to emphasise that there have, on various occasions been white workers who, appear to have been conscious and willing to express worker solidarity towards their black counterparts. For example many WMID respondents stressed that they experienced worker solidarity from their white work mates, this was usually in terms of informing about pay differentials.

Younger West Indians often accuse their parents of being too passive and argue that it was because of this apparent passivity that they experience some of the problems of today. However, was it always passivism, or was this a survival mechanism adopted by early immigrants to enable them to deal with their situations? In various work done on migrant labour in the United States, it was stressed that often the immigrant 'decided with his feet' if he was dissatisfied with conditions at work. Interviews with many Jamaican immigrants indicate that in the early days - when jobs were relatively plentiful - they simply did not go back to work if they met with a situation with which they could not cope - such as racist treatment in matters of pay and types of work they were made to do.

When questioned about rates of pay, the majority of immigrants did not know what their white work-mates

received. In the main, however, they appeared to accept that when the white workers were on a higher graded job, they did not mind the wage differential. They did, however, resent the fact that often white people, doing the same jobs as themselves were found to be paid a higher rate. In cases as these, however, instead of confronting their employers, many immigrants would simply leave and seek another job. Some of them stressed that they did not want to get their white work-mates into trouble because often, knowledge about wage differential was gained through collusion between the immigrant and his native work-mates, (i.e., the latter actually telling about or showing contents of wage packet). Another reason was that, as the majority of them did not plan to stay for more than five years, they didn't see much point in stirring up unpleasantness - which to them was inevitable in any bid for equity they may have become involved in.

There were, of course, some immigrants who attempted to confront the establishment over inequalities - a few were elected as Shop Stewards - but in the main, the majority of migrants did not deal with the problems of racial injustices at work, in an overt way.

Not much work has been done presenting the immigrants' perspective on their involvement in trade union activities in Britain, and unfortunately, this study is not comprehensive enough to look at the topic in depth. Nevertheless, as will be seen later on, many of the people I interviewed had no real commitment to trade unions here, apart from being paid-up members. It would be a grave mistake, however, to conclude that Jamaicans are ignorant of, or unsympathetic to the ideals of trade unionism. Many had welcomed the arrival of trade unions back home and had given vocal support even though impecuniness often ensured that 'union dues' were not always forthcoming. This will, undoubtedly prompt accusation of 'opting out' of the struggle. However, a likely response is that, without the strength that white working class solidarity has in this



societal setting, individual and group labour expenditure of Black people in general causes, will often prove an expensive and often futile use of their resources.

There is no doubt that immigrants early experiences in this country, determined their response to organisations like trade unions. Many were conscious that often, these unions were in the vanguard of anti-immigrant abuses. Although some of the reasons underlying the official unions response to black immigration stemmed from a desire to safeguard their members from the consequences of imported labour, this was often mixed with racism and usually channelled through racist practices and abuses. Further, immigrants rarely compete with indigenous workers, consequently, co-option of these potential members could have been used to strengthen workers solidarity. Almost all the research to date reveals that as well as caucussing on their own, Black people are still more likely to join trade Unions than their white counterparts.[46]

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**CHAPTER 7****BLACK WORKING CLASS****ENTREPRENEURSHIP****IN JAMAICA AND THE U.K.****Introduction**

This chapter reviews - with the help of various MMID case studies - the nature of entrepreneurship and the process of business development amongst working class Jamaicans in their home country. Secondly, an examination of their attempts at similar pursuits as labour migrants in Britain is undertaken to discover the extent to which these largely pre-industrial forms of entrepreneurship have been effectively transferred from Jamaica to Britain, and finally an attempt will be made to contextualise the discussions within the contemporary debates about black businesses in Britain generally.

From the following Case Studies an attempt is made to look at respondents whose life histories would place them amongst the working class capitalist group. Their social and economic backgrounds are given in an attempt to locate the motivating factors behind their choices of self-employment and capital accumulation. These case histories, however, are not intended to be representative of Afro-Caribbean immigrants generally. Nevertheless, as both higglers and artisans were greatly represented amongst immigrant groups from Jamaica, knowledge of their backgrounds in the periphery and later integration into the U.K. economy may at least enable some very broad generalisations to be made about black working class entrepreneurship and immigrant business expertise transference.

### The nature of Entrepreneurship

To attempt a definition of 'entrepreneur' - the person, and 'entrepreneurship' the activity, within the context of working-class economic activities, is fraught with many problems. For example, to what extent can working-class proprietorship be called entrepreneurship in traditional nineteenth century context? Does entrepreneurship necessarily involve capitalistic or profit-oriented motives? What are the criteria used for defining successful entrepreneurship? And importantly, to what extent can it be assumed that 'successful' entrepreneurship is transferable from one societal setting to another?

Success of individual businesses is popularly believed to be dependent on the expertise of the founder i.e., his/her educational and experiential background. Thus Ward and Reeves [1], refer to a study of Michigan which indicated that businesses which were founded by 'craftsmen' using their craft skills as the basis for business development, were less successful than those founded by comparatively better educated middle class persons. Although these people often had no specific skills their generally wider experience allowed them to identify and grasp business potential, and their administrative/ managerial expertise allowed them to achieve 'success' much more quickly than their craft-based competitors.

In his Foreword to Carol Kennedy's [2] work on Entrepreneurs, Sir James Goldsmith wrote:-

Entrepreneurs come in all shapes and sizes. They straddle every class and every system of education. The common theme that links them is sound judgement, ambition, determination, capacity to assess and take risks, hard work, greed, fear and luck. ....

On the whole, entrepreneurs are uneducated or self educated. Any analysis of successful entrepreneurs over the past 50 years in the West, shows that formal higher education must be a great

disadvantage.....Our Western education produces  
specialists whereas entrepreneurs must be  
generalists.

Such broad generalisations as these would certainly encompass  
WMID respondents.

Hugh Aitkin<sup>[3]</sup>, in exploring the subject of enterprise found  
that 'personifying the concept' of entrepreneurship was  
problematic. He believed that 'no person could be an  
entrepreneur all of the time, (but) that a great variety of  
persons acted as entrepreneurs some of the time' He suggested  
therefore that it was '... better ... to adjure all talk of  
the entrepreneur as a real person and concentrate on  
entrepreneurship as a category of action.'<sup>[4]</sup> Despite the  
above, Aitkin went on to reflect that because economic theory  
- of which the study of entrepreneurship forms a part - has  
increasingly tended towards impersonalisation, there is  
validity in studying the individual, because, 'economics is  
... the study of what people do, and that sometimes what a  
particular individual decides to do in a particular set of  
circumstances can have very important consequences.'

Care should, however, be taken not to apply generalisations  
from conclusions of such individual studies. If focus is  
placed on the actions - as opposed to the actors, then we will  
discover that irrespective of scale, often the motivations and  
actions involved in establishing a business, are the same - be  
it the development of a small artisan-type or larger concern.

In writing of the Industrial Revolution Flinn<sup>[5]</sup> : cited in  
P.L. Payne<sup>[6]</sup>, wrote that the individual we now refer to as  
'entrepreneur' '... organised production. He it was who  
brought together the capital (his own or somebody else's) and  
the labour force, selected the most appropriate site for  
operations, chose the particular technologies of production to  
be employed, bargained for raw materials and found outlets for  
the finished product.'<sup>[7]</sup> Today, with the presence of  
separate commercial, financial and managerial institutions,

the task is less laborious for those entrepreneurs who can afford to pay. For others, corporate institutions now exist - funded by a mixture of charitable organisations, local as well as central authorities, together with professional bodies. Thus, ignorance in these areas need, no longer impede entrepreneurial pursuits.

Flinn's descriptions of the eighteenth century entrepreneur seem to fit John Benson's<sup>[8]</sup> definition of a 'penny capitalist'. For Benson, penny capitalism is predominantly a working class phenomenon, whereas Flinn's entrepreneur was accorded no specific class status - though he/she was generally believed to be lower middle class. Benson wrote that the penny capitalist should be:-

responsible for the whole process, however small: from acquiring the necessary capital, choosing a site, bargaining for raw materials, deciding the working methods, and providing the tools, to finding a market for the finished product."

prepared to assume risks in the hope of making profits."

of working class origin"

(operating) on a small scale ... his capital, his turnover and his profits should all be measured, if not in pence, then in pounds and shillings rather than in hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of pounds."

The penny capitalist then, he summarised, 'is a man or woman who went into business on a small scale in the hope of profit (but with the possibility of loss) and made him/her self responsible for every facet of the enterprise'<sup>[10]</sup>.

According to Benson, some 'penny capitalists' are defensive - i.e. an attempt to buffer oneself against the worse social and economic problems. In this eventuality, the 'capitalist' has a full-time job of some sort and any work in this area is additional - provision for a 'rainy day'. Opposite to this is the working class individual who seeks economic independence and amassing of capital. In this respect, one could argue



that apart from the scales of accumulation - which is often related to variables beyond the control of the individual - penny capitalists are not very different from so-called 'real traditional capitalists'. Benson rightly points out therefore "... it is conceptually and historically impossible to distinguish clearly penny capitalists from wage-labourers below and from the petty bourgeoisie above.'<sup>[11]</sup>

Working class Entrepreneurship - A Pragmatic bid for Self advancement?

Before closer scrutiny of respondents entrepreneurial involvement both in Jamaica and the U.K. it is necessary to explore the notion of entrepreneurship and the relationship between entrepreneurial activities and capitalism, within the context of limited employment or economic alternatives.

Henry Rosovsky<sup>[12]</sup> refers to the existence of entrepreneurial activities in Russian-serfdom, and that these enterprises formed the third part of Russian entrepreneurship. Many Serfs were able to amass enormous sums of money, thus Rosovsky mentions "a serf resident of Moscow who bought his freedom for 800,000 rubles" in the 1830s, and another who would have gladly given his house and fortune of 600,000 rubles to his lord in return for his freedom.<sup>[13]</sup>

What is relevant to note here, is that some individuals - albeit a small proportion who had ownership of factors of production, skills or expertise, - have been able to use their enterprise to amass capital, even under the constraining hands of serfdom or slavery.

Conspicuous results of working class initiative and enterprise, while being worthy of acknowledgment, should not be used to hide the fact that it is only the smallest minority of people who are able to circumvent the repressiveness of serfdom, slavery, autocratic state governments, or inhumane factors inherent in capitalism, to gain equitable economic rewards through entrepreneurial pursuits or waged labour.

Further, without safeguards, these same 'achievers' will often replicate the repression they fought to escape.

Success stories, such as mentioned above are, therefore, to be treated as 'atypical'. To do less would lead to devaluation of the struggles of thousands of enterprising people who have somehow 'failed', to make the capitalist grade. Further, the end result of pedestallising 'achievers' (the individuals), as opposed to 'achievement' (interdependent actions over which the individual does not necessarily have full control), could divert into the area of biological determinism (social Darwinism). Such futile quests are, however, not of interest here. The chapter is concerned, rather, to emphasise some of the processes involved in working class bid for economic self-determinism. The case studies will invariably emphasise both the dynamism of entrepreneurial activities i.e., 'creative responses' or processes involved in economic development, as well as specific attributes of individuals. As has been pointed out, however, this latter point is not germane to the main area of concern.

Due to respondents' experiential span in both Less Developed and Developed economies, the following, though focusing on Jamaicans will, hopefully enable generalisations to be made on the position of working class entrepreneurship.

#### Working class Entrepreneurship in Jamaica

From the above description, it would appear that the majority of WMID respondents who worked full or part time for themselves, would fall within the category of penny-capitalists.

Table 7.1 below reveals that more than a third male respondents and almost one quarter female respondents in the WMID said they were fully self-employed in Jamaica. In addition to this, a similar proportion of males and approx. 25% females said they were engaged in entrepreneurial

activities at the same time as working for an employer. The Table also shows the types of activities in which respondents were engaged in as own proprietors, working either on a full or part-time basis.

Because this is a retrospective study, the evidence proffered by respondents in WMID reveals that individually, none of their activities could be deemed to have had far reaching effects outside of their immediate households or districts, although through their collective accumulation of capital they undoubtedly contributed to the economy on a macro level [14]

TABLE - 7.1

ENGAGEMENTS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN JAMAICA

Types of Activities	Males	Females
	N = 24	N = 21
Baking	2	1
Butchering,	1	-
Cabinet making,	3	-
Carpentry	2	-
Cook (Chinese food)	1	-
Dressmaking/Embroidery Sewing/Tailoring	2	6
Farming/Agriculturalist/Cultivator	16	2
Higglering/Paper bag making	-	4
House/painting	2	-
Kindergarten teacher	-	2
Pipefitting	1	-
Roof-shingle making	1	-
Stone Masonry	2	-

Source: West Midlands Interview Data : 1984

The complexity of motivating forces underlying the unmistakably high involvement of WMID respondents in small proprietorships are worth exploring. This is because of their potential for micro as well as macro implications. There is a notion that the ambition for independence, which a small

business seems to confer, is somehow basic to human nature, thus, entrepreneurial pursuits are deemed to be natural human responses. An extension of this idea argument could be that because migrants are often amongst the most enterprising section of any society, they enter the receiving country, already imbued with entrepreneurial zeal. Consequently, one could logically expect them to become involved in any activity, including small businesses, which they believe to be capable of aiding their bid for capital accumulation and - for many - quicker return home. Of course this would be a simplistic analysis of the situation in an economically backward and resource depleted geographical area, where migration is seen by the majority of people as the only escape valve. That some are able to amass enough capital to affect emigration, often has little to do with individual enterprise but sometimes more to luck - often in the form of family land legacy.

Further, it could be argued that the above entrepreneurial pursuits are in line with a tradition of peasant and artisan proprietorship, common throughout the world. In these cases, they are often purely pragmatic bids for economic survival in the midst of depleted resources and economic and social underdevelopment.

WNID Respondents' involvement in one-person activities, must be acknowledged as a number of complex inter-relating factors, comprising the need for economic subsistence in an absence of alternative employment outlet. Additionally, there was undoubtedly, a strong desire to be one's own boss or to innovate; Case Study 1 clearly indicate strong innovative achievements by the respondent.

Importantly when considering working-class proprietorships, it is necessary to discover the extent to which these activities and their ability to delay proletarianisation, could be viewed as a deterrent to working class cohesion. If this is so, to what extent could they become state tools against workers solidarity measures?

The Miggler

Name:	J. Tallock
Age:	61 yrs.
Sex:	Female
D.o.B:	3.9.1923
Parish of Origin:	St. Catherine
Marital Status:	Separated
Age of Marriage:	35
No. of Children:	Born in Jamaica 2
No. of Children:	Born in UK 0
Formal Education:	Elementary

Family background

Mrs. Tallock was one of ten children, some twins, but only the first and last (herself) was alive at the time of the interview. Apart from her eldest sister, she only remembers one brother, whom she believes was 30 yrs. old when he died.

On her mother's death, Mrs. Tallock went to live with her eldest sister. Her father worked away from home and only returned intermittently, until he finally left - while respondent was very young. She said she didn't know where her father was, after - 'a woman pinched him'; this trauma she believes was responsible for her mother's eventual death.

Before he left, her father worked on a sugar Estate, while at the same time he had his own 'ground' where he grew bananas, coconuts, sugar cane, peas, etc. Of her mother she said:-

Mother used to make candy and my sister used to do peppermint cake ... and do a lotta baking, but I never put my hands to it. It's only since I came here and going to the Church dam .....

Because Mrs. Tallock's mother became ill when she was very young, she had to begin work at the very early age of 11

years. At that time, she said, she was the only person in the household who worked for wages.

#### Personal Work Experience

When I asked Mrs. Tallock how old she was when she first started to work for wages, she replied:-

I'm ashamed to say it .... eleven. I was eleven. Too young.... People in Jamaica, when I was a child growing up and they have their sons and daughters leave school, they would try their best to send them on for further education.

And whatever trade ... like the father had, they would love the boy to come and be a carpenter, and the mother, if she is a dressmaker, she would love the girl to come a dressmaker. But as the years goes by, the children grow up and they have their own .... they say I don't want to be a dressmaker. I would love to sew my own clothes, but I want a profession, different from my mother. An then, you know, some parents grieve, they seh, we try our best and you don't want to have what we have. But some parents understand ... they try to read a lot, to get to understand the generation growing up after them. So, it wasn't a custom.

People in Jamaica used to let their children go on until some of them ... if they don't get marry ... all twenty years old, they still going on ... and they (the parents), maintainin dem and sending dem to College, and anything deh want, an where deh want to go. We used to have Scholarship in Jamaica and children at 11, deh used to get di scholarship ... somedem go to America for certain period and come back....

Asked about how much money she received as her first wage and about the nature of the job, she replied:-

My first wage was five shillings for the week ... that's one shilling a day. ....I was young, but I was very quick because ... learning to read, I was very quick at it. If you tell me anything, I don't forget it, maybe I couldn't write properly, and do figures properly, but I was quick. So when my mother took ill, and I went out to work, her friend took her down to St.Thomas for a change, for we were living in Portland when my father leave St. Catherine and go to work.... and dis morning we went out

to a place ... it's still there ... call Stokes Hall property, to look for work, and there were big women there ... I was di only chile ... an each parson get a bag-and-a-half a manura ... you know ... dat's a day's work ... you got to done dat within di day. .... put it aroun di banana root.

At her mother's death she went to live with her sister and to work with a lady, doing domestic work. She didn't stay long however because, according to her, 'they didn't treat mi very good,' nor did she get on with her sister. Consequently she went to live in Kingston in an attempt to obtain work. Of this period she reminisced:-

R. After I leave my sister and went to Kingston, I started to do domestic work. Three of us live in one room.... we didn't have nothing, none of us, for we were young girls.

Q. Did you know any of them before?

R. No, we just meet ..... If you living with somebody, and yu fad up of di people ... 'cause you are not free, an yu can find two people .... But since some people is very unfair, yu couldn't settle down until yu find three of you heading di same way ..... dat is when we settle down.

Yu don't have wardrobes an all dat, yu just have yu clothes in suitcases.... an we get board ... piece of board and make like a shelf. Maybe you have a job an I don't have a job ... an di other one have a job .... so if you two are working an I don't have a job yet, I do all di cooking. Maybe di domestic place yu work, yu don't have to come home an eat .... but like yu have yu Sunday off .... we make big dinner, and keep di place tidy. We only had one cot .... one cot share between us.

Q. When you say cot ... what do you mean?

R. Just a bed ... yu know di folding ... dose are made from canvas. If yu put it up high it comes small ... but if yu put it low, yu wide it out. .... But we all don't sleep on di one cot the same night. We share it .... one would be on di floor two in di cot ... or maybe two on di floor ... for if some of you are big, yu can't hold on it. If you have a visitor .... an your visitor is coming to visit you, we have the room tidy ... wi put up wi little table ... for you see ... you might buy di table ... I buy di chair, and di other one buy di cot ... so wi tidy the room an as soon as your visitor come .. we are off .... you see ... we may go to the theatre .... or walk about town, go to the park... and when the visitor leave ... you know where wi are, to come an fetch us. So we didn't spy on each other, we just live an share. For

no man naeva come to sleep .... we were just young girls ... visitor come an go. An if one should survive an leave and go and gam to a little home of their home, we stay we two ... or get somebody else.

Q. What other type of work did you do in Jamaica?

R. This time I were in Town and I was working and afterward I lost my job, I didn't have a job, and dis man made drinks ... and at the Racecourse he employ three of us... I and a new girl and a boy. But the boy is the one dat is responsible for di money. He stand on the stan and we go around through the racecourse, we make di drinks ... like ice in di glass ... and den pour di syrup in. So di money we had on us, date all di money take back to di man for the bwoy run off wid di res'. So we had was to sen call di man, and him come an take up di barrels an di boxes and ting, and den when we get back into Town he says well, "where's di bwoy?" We seh we don't know because he is responsa ... So di man says he's not going to pay us because we mus know what happen.

Well I was ruthless! The other girl start crying, but I was ruthless!.... truly, they couldn't push si about. So I says O.K. ... I seh to her you don' cry, come along ... and we go outside and si a policeman .. and we told it to the policeman and he says alright let's go.... and we went in and seh to di man .... you got to pay dem because deh didn't steal anything .. they could have gone as well. You know how much he gave us? Seven shilling! (instead of ten shillings). I give her a half an I took half ... an she went away crying, but I took mine and I go home and I said to di other girls .... "Well I get let down today .. di man rob us.".... An I don' want to go back an do no domestic work ... I fed up a getting up early and running morning time .... and it was only cheap, it was only three shilling a week.

It's only when Bustamante come about in Jamaica before wages just gradually improve ....., and di people get scared ... so if yu working with dem and you are a good worker an yu seh to dem well I'm going to bring yu Union, deh quickly says "Well, how much more do you want?" You can tell dem any amount, deh pay ... cause deh was scared!

Q. Were you in the Union then?

R. No, we weren't in no Union! Nobody was in no Union, but as di Union come about, after '38, you know, the Uprising. (The Employers) would seh to you "Are you a Labour Party Member?" "Yes". Deh don' give you di job! .. So I'd seh (threateningly) "yu have di work ... an alright... alright .. I'm going back to Town!" By di time yu reach di gate dem call yu back ... yu actually black-mailing dem .. 'cause deh get scared, for dis ting deh didn't know about. An den everybody start to get



brave an talk back ... for (before) yu wouldn't talk ...  
yu open yu mouth deh jus throw you out!

So I took my three and six and I went home, and I said to the girls, I'm going to do some higglering with my three and six. They laugh me to scorn, it was fun.

Anyhow, there was this man I knew from St. Thomas, his wife run a little lodging house, but he drinks a lot, and he was drunk the day and walking through the market and the girls deh have deh tings put out an he stand on it ... mash up di tomato ... an they nearly kill him! I had was to go an ask how much it was I'll pay for it. Although he was drunk, he nevva forget... and then I only had that three an six dat Sunday night an I went in di market, an he came in wid a big truck load of bananas. Everybody was buying ... everybody buying. An I said to myself, I would love to get some a dat, because it was scarce... an dat would be a good start.

And I stand up deh and I see one a di chap an I seh to him ... "How much banana I can get for dis three-an-six?" Him seh maybe you'll get a bunch... And he (the man she had helped) saw mi talking to di fellow, and when the fellow move off, the fellow went to him an mus be ask him if he could give me bout two for the three-an-six. "And he said who is she?" An him come up and said "Oh I know her, give her what she want".

I seh "No ... I got only three-an-six". He seh "Yes, you save my life." So, they give me twenty-five stem, an dat was twenty five shilling. And a lady said to mi, everybody guine to wean buy dem whole, ... don't sell dem. Daylight now ... and the higgler coming in, everybody coming in, restaurant people coming in, cook-shop people coming in ... no banana. Di others dat have, they were big higgler an they wouldn't sell dem....

And she had some an she started to cut dem up and sell dem, an when she almost finish she said "I'll help you" She said if anybody want a whole bunch sell dem one bunch fi five shilling. While it was over-charging, but they don' have any so they'll buy it.

When it all finish I had about fifty shilling ... and I look for him, and he was going home Monday evening and I look for him an pay him, an he said, "yu sure you didn't borrow dis money?" ... And ever since ... when he come to di market, he seh to (the higgler), whatever yu have sell her, if she don't have any money give it to her, if she can't pay yu when yu going, I'll pay, and dat's where I started ... and God really bless me... I didn't realise it at dat time, but him really bless me.

They had Banana Depot and deh used to sell di banana to di poorer people, you know, but yu can't get more than one bunch, an it was still scarce. An dat day now, I an

my frien went up. We took the tram, an a hand-cart chap come after us. And when we get dere, it was about four different banana depot... not near to each other. So di girl seh to ma, "but you can't get more than one, an I can't get more than one"... I see dis young man and I seh "Yu buying?", and him seh no him waiting fi his mother, I seh "You get in di queue an buy mi one.... the other little one seh, "I'll buy yu one Miss ....." And when I finish up from dere ... we go di other place ... mine yu, we have to give dem little money, yu know, an when I finish I get a whole hand-cart full ... about thirty stem (bunches). We come off at Orange Street, near di Park and we start to walk from dere to Coronation Market, and crowd follow us .... Banana was very scarce.

Mrs. Tallock eventually left the room which she shared with the two other girls and went to live in Trench Pen, possibly the most notorious slum area of Kingston (now called Trench Town). She acquired a room and was allowed to set up a stall at the front of the house - just inside the fence. From here she started to sell coal, wood and market goods such as fruits and vegetables.

Mrs. Tallock noticed that many people on their way from work would wish to purchase some coal, but often there were no bags, so she started to make her own paper bags. To do this, she used to purchase large paper bags in which wholesale granulated sugar were imported, to make up her bags. She also found an additional source at the Condensery where dried milk was imported in multi-layered paper bags. The person at the Condensery the middle-man who used to supply the bags, fell off a truck and died which meant that she had problems with supply. Her supplier's successor was not as keen to supply her with the dried milk bags, and after a delegation of local higglers approached her and asked whether she would be prepared to go directly to the Condensery, rather than through this supplier, she acquiesced. Mrs. Tallock further stated that during shortage of supply - at various times - she approached the Cement Factory for their bags - stressing that as long as the inside bag was removed and either discarded or cleaned and used to wrap things where food contamination was not a threat - the remaining layers of the bags were suitable to be made into smaller bags - for any commodity.

Of the time when she was approached by other higglera to purchase from the Condensery, Mrs. Tallock said:-

I buy must be two thousand, (damaged bags were given to her). And he said how I gonna carry it? I sah, well I don't have no transportation, but I'll take a half ... and dere was something going into Spanish Town, and I stop at di market and den get a taxi an go over.

An dat's how I started there, an when I couldn't go in, I could ring him and when the milk truck is coming in, he send the bags on the milk truck, and thay put dem off at Boys Town, and di hand-cart man bring dem up.

Dese girls dat encourage mi to do it, afta when everybody si dem getting dese bags .... not di cement bags now ... dese are clean bags, and deh sah 'Who did yu buy dat bag from?' And thay might say 'Miss Jana .... si buy dem from Miss Jana.' And it go on until all di customer come. So I didn't have to take it into Town, I just take it and carry it to mi house, and dah come for it.

For a while, Mrs. Tallock only sold bags in the market, though she continued to sell food at her house. Later on she decided to diversify into other areas such as clothes making. At this stage, she no longer made paper bags. Instead, she continued to purchase the large ones in bulk and sold them to the group of higglera who had encouraged her to cut out the middle-man in the form of the Condensery Employee - her original supplier.

In addition, there was a group of young girls who used to help her to sew and do odd jobs - often unpaid. She decided, therefore, to assist by encouraging them to purchase some of the large bags from her and make up their own small bags. These small bags she then took with her to the market and sold them for the girls. This was shrewd action on her part as it ensured that firstly, she was able to increase the demand for her large milk bags. Secondly, by offering to sell the made-up bags for the girls, they would continue to offer her their labour in a non-remunerative relationship; as long as they had some money coming into their hands each week, the pressure of seeking work would be reduced. Of course, for many of them it would have been almost impossible to obtain work, and if they did the wages would be very small, possibly no more than they received from the sale of their bags. Mrs. Tallock said

she used to sell 'thousands and thousands of bags', going to the market from Friday night to Saturday until about 4.00 p.m.. It was there that she got the idea to start making ready-made clothes on a large scale, for indeed, she had been selling some previously - though on a small scale. Consequently, she purchased material from 'a Syrian man called Mr. Fatah', and gave the materials to a lady who had:-

a small business ... you would'nt call it a factory ... 'cause it was right in her house... but a very big room... she have a big cutting table, and she sew for most of the stores in Town .... She make shirts, she don't make nothing but shirts. I used to take shirt material up to her. Like she going to cut four, five dozen shirt, the big material is spread down on the table, and she rest the pattern on it and cut. When she cut all the pieces, she put them into bundle and tie them, so you that coming to sew now, all the pieces are there, and you fit the shirt, put the plain top on, pass it unto the next person, an dat one might just put the collar on ... the other one put the sleeve in, the other one put the cuff in ... an it go to the last one, they put the button holes.

I asked the respondent why she decided to give someone else the shirts to be made, when she herself could sew. She replied that it was too much for her to do, so by giving the order out, she would be able to get more shirts. This was especially pertinent:-

when we used to have sugar cane in Jamaica .... crop time ... and during that season, you got to go to the market Friday.... (and) Saturday you go to the cane piece to sell. So you got a lot more things to do, and I only had just one little hand machine, I hired .... I didn't buy one of mi own yet. I had help, yes .... sometime is free labour, the girls dem just come along, and should in case they see a bit of material and they love it, they can have it, so they just come and give their help. Some been paid, but they nevva bothered about being paid. What they want is just a blouse or a skirt ... and on Saturday evenings when I come back, they used to come to meet mi down the road when I get off the bus. Everybody carry something, and then everybody expecting something. It was quite helpful. The parents would come along on a Thursday evening (to help), for every Friday morning I leave fi di country, di truck will come early and pick all the baggage up and all di passengers will assemble at Spanish Town Road.

Mrs. Tallock said that during cane cutting times traders from Kingston used to go to the sugar estates where they had a ready market. This is because people came from all over the country to obtain seasonal work on the Estates. They did not go home until the cane cutting season was over; this she believed lasted for between two to three months, and although the workers would write to their families and send monies home, they themselves did not return until the end of the season. Consequently they lived in 'digs' and, needed to purchase necessities such as food etc. The respondent reported that many higglers - at these times - took food from the town to the rural estates, especially for the finale of the crop season which she called 'the back money pay bill' which sometimes lasted for three days. People from other Estates would congregate at two estates where all the bonuses, pay rise etc which were owing to the workers, would be paid up, because although workers received a weekly wage, they did not get any outstanding back-pay until then. This period seemed to have been a jamboree for higglers, so trucks, cars and pedestrians would turn up at the estate gates with various commodities to sell. At that time, she said; "yu free to do what yu want to do ... yu sell a lot a mixture ... raw material and such delika".

On these occasions she used to sell under-pants and other ready made clothes. Some she made herself, some she bought, while still she gave out orders to others to make up garments for her. According to the Respondent:-

Most traders have a tailor sometimes (they live) in town, sometimes is out in di country ... that you would buy yu material, buy all yu trimmings; yu take dem there on a Monday, and on a Thursday on yu way to market yu collect dem, (the sewn garments)

- Q. Your first wage was five shillings a week. Can you remember how much you were earning just before you came here from your selling?

- R. I could get about £28.00 a week.
- Q. You were earning £28. 00 per week ... you didn't think that was exceptional.
- R. I think that was good to the time ... it was the season we were living in. At dat time, if yu doing a business an you span £100 and yu get through the stuff quickly an yu make a £80 profit, or if yu span a £50 an yu make a £25 profit, dat is very good business in dose days.....

I asked Mrs. Tallock about the work she has done since migrating to the U.K. She said she came on a Tuesday and stayed at home for the rest of that week. On the following Monday, however, she went out to look for a job, and by Tuesday, one of the ladies in the home where she lived took her to a place where she had seen a notice advertising vacancies. She was offered the job on Wednesday and commenced work on the Thursday. She related her earliest labour experience as follows:-

It was a little factory behind the Yorkshire Pub, call Recton. It was only 2/6d an hour. They didn't keep week in hand, and they pay you di Friday. So I went to work di Thursday morning and di Friday I had di first day's pay and they took eight shillings out of that fi insurance ... I could never forget, an give mi thirteen shilling an three pence. And when I went home and open the thing I was sad ... I seh, 'den how they doan ask mi if they suppose to take this money? They said, "you will learn ... they doan ask yu nothing!

I work in dat job fi seven months.... It was 2/6d an hour, an yu work fi eight hours, an they took eight shillings out of all that, di insurance.

I asked her how she felt, bearing in mind that she could earn as much as £28.00 per week in Jamaica. She said:-

You could see the grief ... I cry every night! I wanted to go home..... Once my nephew wrote to me and ask me to send him some clothes, dat seh mi cry worse .. I didn't have di money to buy it ... an I was angry an I write him an tell him seh I doan come here to pick up money off di street of Englan ... whe yu expect mi to get ... I only just come here, not only three months yet. I was angry man.... not because I didn't want to do it, but I doan have it.

At the time of interview in 1984, respondent had a stall in a main City market where she sold ready-made clothes. Some of which she made herself, after obtaining a loan from a Finance Company to purchase an industrial machine. This she uses in her rented room in a shared house, as she does not own her own property in Britain. She has, however, been able to return to Jamaica to purchase a house with an acre of land.

#### Artisan Tailor

Name:	S. L. Linden	
Sex:	Male	
Age:	51 yrs.	
D.o.b.	16.12.31	
Parish of Origin	St. Ann	
Marital Status:	Married	
Age of Marriage:	30 yrs	
No. of children:	Born in Jamaica	2
No. of children:	Born in UK	1
Formal Education:	Elementary	

#### Family background

Mr. Linden lived with his grandmother until he was six years old, at which time he went to live with his mother and step-father, a step-brother and sister. He said no one in his parental household worked for wages, but according to him:-

... my step-father did farming, and my mother was the house-keeper.... my eldest brother .. after he left school, went into the farming business with our step-father. And my sister, she went sewing. .... After she had been there for a while, she got married and becomes a home-maker.

questioned further, he responded:-

- Q. Apart from bananas and coffee is there anything else he did for money ...?
- R. He had cows, goats, fowls.... The cows supply milk there was also the government system that take milk from us...the truck comes along every morning and they would

buy the milk by the gallon. They don't pay us every morning, but they keep the record and at the end of month, we get a cheque.

Q. So your step-father had what seemed to be a profitable business?

R. .... That was the means of living, you see ... of course, he wasn't a rich man, but then, he had enough to keep the family.

Of his mother, Mr. Linden remarked:-

R. She did sewing. That was her main means of making money, she used to make dresses for ladies, wedding suits, and all the rest of it.... she was a real good dressmaker.

Q. Did she have people working with her?

R. She didn't have a workshop, she worked at home. She had girls (training with her)... not a lot...they just come on a part-time basis..

She also had two machines and people would come in at times and hire the machines from her ... on a day or so ... and worked right there .... Many people couldn't afford to own a machine, you know, and the little they did have a to sew, you know, they just come and hire the machine for the day.

#### Work Experience

Of his personal work experience, Mr. Linden recalled that he went to elementary school in St. Ann until, according to him, 'I graduated at thirteen' and went to learn the tailoring trade at that age. Three boys were apprenticed to the local tailor where it was the usual custom for parents to pay the tailor to train their boys. Often - after about a year, when it was thought the trainee had improved sufficiently, parents would no longer have to pay, instead trainees would be given a small sum (in this case three shillings each week) for pocket money by the tailor, although parents had to continue to be responsible for the trainees. This respondents training lasted for three years, after which he set up on his own - as was the custom - because, he stressed:-



... boys go and come, ... when everyone is finished, he goes out on his own and new ones come in.

... although it wasn't stressed, it was understood that you wouldn't set up in the same area.... If you are a good master-builder, you can have people from all over the place coming ... for you to make .... (their clothes).

Mr. Linden purchased his first sewing machine - a Singer - when he was 16 years old. This was taken out on credit where he paid by instalment on a monthly basis. He said he received orders for men's suits, trousers, jackets, waist-coats. At the same time, according to him:-

most tailors in those days ... we does a bit of dry-cleaning.... not on a big scale ... but, you know, people have their suits needs pressing and we did a bit of dry-cleaning and pressing.

I asked about monetary return from his business to which he replied:-

R. Well ... a week .. you see, it's hard to really say, 'cause of course, you wasn't on a salary you know, or weekly wages. There are some weeks you make more than others. But on a whole I would say ... well .. we could accumulate twenty pounds per week - basically, you know.

Q. Was that considered a lot of money in those days?

R. Well, it wasn't a lot of money, but it could carry you along.

In comparing himself with a peasant farmer he said:-

R. Agricultural people, they .... some does farming on a large scale, which of course is their basic means of living and some just do enough for the family, you know, food ... to provide food for the family. Now, ... like my father they have crops like coffee, pineapples, bananas ... all those are being sold, you know and that bring the money ... and apart from that, they supply the home with good, so ... in those cases, you had fathers who did farming for a living and also supply the family with food.

His parents, he said would always help him out if his takings for the week weren't enough, they would still substitute me ... my mother. Because even when I bought the machine, some months when I couldn't pay, my mother paid the monthly instalments.

I asked whether he could remember what the first money he made from sewing was, after he set up on his own, to which he replied:-?

No ... no ... you see, it's very hard because see, you could have a dozen customer for the week, and they would come and some would pay half, some would pay fully, some would ... we have stock there made and they are made for weeks and nobody would come for them ... you know, there's a lot of money, you see, so it's very hard to really determine how much I could make weekly, but ... I tell you this now ... the first money I made I couldn't forget that ... it was three shillings, and it was my boss who gave me that ... the first money he gave me ... As I said, it wasn't a wage or a salary but it was more or less pocket money because you automatically come a helper because the work that we was working on, they were paid work ... to him ... so his kindness would encourage us ... give us pocket money .. and the first money he gave was three shillings.

- Q. You said before that you made about twenty pounds a week ... would that be the sum you were making when you decided to come to England?
- R. Yes, that would be. You see, as time goes on, you know, of course things as it is, things become more expensive and, you know, say like, for instant, when I went to trade first, I would make a trousers for a customer and you would charge them three shillings, right, and I remember when I left Jamaica, it went to seven shillings ... yes, seven shillings to make a trousers!
- Q. But was that considered by people to be a very large amount or could most of your customers afford it?
- R. ... It's like anything else, we have to go to the store and shop, we think it's quite expensive, but then we have no choice, we have to pay the man, you know ....
- Q. Did most people have their clothes made from a tailor .... or could they go and buy ready-made clothes?
- R. Well, in the cities I believe they could get more ready-made clothing, but in the country where I lived and worked, it wasn't so prevalent to get ready-made clothes,

because of course, you know ... the population is small and if you said ... well ... have an establishment to stock it with ready-made clothes, it would be in your hand for months and years, you know ... so it wasn't so prevalent in the countryside. Mostly, the stores would sell raw material and then the customer would go to the store, buy the raw materials and bring it to us .. Well, we made to measure.

- Q. What was the state of your tailor shop then, on leaving Jamaica ... how profitable was the business?
- R. Well, I would say, fairly profitable. It wasn't as ... couldn't make as a wealthy person....
- Q. What do you call a wealthy person?
- R. Well, we term people wealthy..... Now, if a person is rich they can afford what they need or what they want. If a person is wealthy, you can buy your food, you can pay your demands and you can carry on, but you couldn't save a lot, right? ... And the person who is poor ... they are deprived of the ... you know ... things that life demands, they can't afford it.
- Q. Would you have called yourself a poor person?
- R. Well .... no
- Q. You were wealthy?
- R. I don't know if I was as much as wealthy but ....
- Q. From the description you gave ....?
- R. Yes ...from the description I gave, yes .. Well of course, I did say .... if you remember ... it wasn't enough to make me wealthy, it's just a means of living, day to day living.
- ... If I call myself poor, God wouldn't see ... pleased with me because I would be telling a lie. I could buy me food and I lived fairly comfortable and, you know, so people who I would say poor ... I've seen many poor people who can't afford to buy their food, can't afford to buy their clothes and, you know, what like really ... not luxury .... necessities of life. You know, if you can't afford necessities of life, you're poor ... from my term, you know.
- Q. Did you employ anyone to work with you?
- R. No, I had boys (who) came to learn trade with me ... but not employed.... I gave them pocket money ... that's the usual system.
- Q. And the pocket money was similar to what you got?

- R. Yes .. yes .. you see, well of course, as I said, time changes and things become more expensive.
- Q. So you gave more?
- R. I gave them more than I would be receiving .... when I was apprentice ... I remember giving them five shillings sometimes ... seven shillings sometimes... see, as I've said, it isn't a set wage, by this, what you can afford and, you know... make everybody happy.
- Q. You could have not given them anything, couldn't you?
- R. Oh sure! Oh sure!
- Q. And it wouldn't be considered .....?
- R. Robbery? No!
- Q. Why did you decide to emigrate?
- R. Well ... that's a big question (laugh) ... I decide to emigrate to make a better living ... that was my intention ... make a better living. I did not intend to stay here as long as I do ... as I'm staying here now. I had intended to come over here, work for a few years and go back home with a little money and then I could be able to do my own business .... in a more efficient way.
- Q. ... When you say 'build up', how did you aim to build it up?
- R. Well ... a lot bigger establishment, having two or three machines, and could afford to turn out ... more garments and ... could afford to make more money, in other words .... Because, of course, the bigger your establishment is, the more money you can make and ... of course you can buy what you want ... I had in mind to buy myself a nice home and own a car ... that was my ambition .. you know, and all the rest of it ... those were the prospect that I really had in mind.

In response to my query about the work he had done since his immigration to the U.K., and whether, in fact he had been able to continue with tailoring, Mr. Linden replied:-

I remember when I first came here, then you had to take your passport to the Social Security, first to sign on before you start working. And of course, the passport have all the details ... your profession, your age, your place of birth ...; and the girl who interviewed me ... she said to me ... "Mr .... you are a tailor?". I said, "yeah", she said, "I'm afraid you won't get that job in Birmingham...."

.... I couldn't remember asking her why. ... beggars are no choosers ... I had no choice if I had said, well I was recruited from Jamaica to come to England as a tailor, then I would have been expecting to work as a tailor ... but I just came - to look a job and, of course ... I like the trade, if I had got on to it I would enjoy working on it ... but I puts it down to the fact that I wasn't in the area.

#### Afro-Caribbean Entrepreneurial Involvement in the U.K.

Generally the involvement of Afro-Caribbean people in business in the U.K. has not attracted such research attention until fairly recently. This increased interest must be seen in context of the government's attempt to turn the country into a nation of small businesses, to combat contracting industrialisation.

There is a tendency to compare the seeming 'great success' of the 'Asians' with the 'underachievement' of Afro-Caribbean people in the area of business. Education, business expertise and 'natural ability' are often held as the main factors responsible for 'Asian' perceived supremacy in business. The educational achievement levels of the two groups shows that whereas 15.2% Indian men had been observed as possessing post 'A' level GCE professional and graduate qualifications, amongst the general and Afro-Caribbean population, this was 8.7% and 2.6% respectively. Afro-Caribbean women who had achieved this level was 10.2%, .7% higher than Indian women, but no less than 7% above Afro Caribbean males.

Reeves and Werg<sup>[19]</sup>, when making comparisons to explain the apparent leadership of Asians above Afro-Caribbean people in the business world, referred to the 1971 Census figures which highlighted Asian supremacy in qualification and positional attainment. The figures showed the percentage of Indians and Afro-Caribbean males employed in the main occupational areas as follows:-

	Afro-Car.	Indians
(1) Administrative, Managerials, professional and technical;	4.0	19.0
(2) Clerical/sales as follows:-	4.1	12.0

Source: Newman & Ward (Op.

Many studies have identified factors in British educational provision to be partly blameworthy for this situation (See Swann[16] and Eggleston[17]). If formal qualification, therefore, is a measure of one's ability to succeed in business, the above shows that of the groups mentioned, Afro-Caribbean men are more destined to fail in business. This pre-supposes, of course, that formal educational achievement is the basis of business enterprises and success. A view which conflicts with many observations about numerous 'successful' entrepreneurs. Further, with the rise of 'business consultancy service', both public or private lack of a 'good' all round education will not be such a hindrance to business success, as there will be someone else to do the most intellectually demanding work - albeit for a price.

Other factors which are believed to contribute to Afro-Caribbean relatively poor business performance, compared to 'Asians' include the fact that they number approximately 33% of the Asian population in Britain. Thus, in terms of controlling sections of the market through specific ethnic demands the latter are at an obvious numerical advantage. While this thesis may accurately describe the contemporary situation which can be explained partly through geographical settlement - both in terms of work and residence, language and ethnic encapsulation. To be given long-term credibility, the thesis needs to assume that retailers have a monopoly over buyers in their own ethnic groups, that monopoly control cannot be effectively penetrated by 'non-group' persons and importantly, for the long term survival of the business, that cultural demands will remain inelastic.

Table 7.2 below shows the extent to which respondents from the WMID have been involved in entrepreneurial activities in the U.K., and the outcome of those businesses.

TABLE 7.2

ENGAGEMENT IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN U.K.

Types of Activities	Males N = 24	Females N = 21	Outcome S. P. U.
Grocery shop (full-time)	2	2	F
Barber (full-time)	1	-	S
Bakery (1 full-time 1 part-time)	2	-	F
Off Licence (financial partner)	2	-	F
Holiday Magic (part-time)	2	-	F
Market Stall Holder (full-time)	-	2	S
Home Sewing (intermittently F & P/T)	0	2	U
Part owner of a house	1	0	S
No entrepreneurial activity	14	15	-

Source: West Midland Interview data : 1984

Notes: S = Successful  
F = Failed  
U = Unpredictable (difficult to determine success rate.)

Although the Jamaican involvement showed an even division between those who were involved in full-time proprietorship as against those involved on a part-time basis. The total U.K. involvement - though a lower percentage than in Jamaica, nevertheless indicates that full-time entrepreneurial activities were still most common, i.e. 17%, as against 12.5% part-time, and 12.5% who were not actually involved in using their labour to work the capital - but instead had invested money, while they themselves were totally engaged in other labour pursuits. This is the first time that respondents revealed a straight 'capitalist' tendency which cannot be explained in terms of traditional working class proprietorship. In contrast to entrepreneurial activities mentioned in chapter 6, these were clearly speculative

attempts to make money without personal labour input. As such, it is more akin to petty-bourgeois methods of capital accumulation.

Entrepreneurial activities were undertaken by 29% of female respondents in the WMID. Of this total, 19% were engaged on a full time basis, while 10% worked full and part time intermittently. These figures contrast greatly with female respondents' entrepreneurial activities prior to their emigration from Jamaica. There, Table 6.3 reveals that a total of 43% were engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Of this total, 24% reported that they were fully self-employed, while 19% were partly self-employed. Unlike the male respondents, none of the females reported being involved in any working class proprietorship activities. Instead they displayed stereotypical female entrepreneurial involvements of setting up grocery shop, market stall holders and home-sewing.

What is of particular significance here, is the fact that both male and female respondents exhibited greater involvement in entrepreneurial activities prior to their emigration to the U.K. Further, as is revealed later in Table 8.8, 62.5% males and 48% females intended to become engaged in entrepreneurial activities on their return to Jamaica. Amongst the males there is a decrease of 12.5% amongst those who intended to become engaged in business on their return, compared with those who were actually engaged in those entrepreneurial activities prior to emigration. In contrast, however, 5% more females hoped to become engaged in entrepreneurial activities on their return home than had actually been involved prior to emigration.

None of the respondents had expressed an intention to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the U.K. but Table 7.2 above, reveals that approximately two-thirds of the males who were previously engaged in business ventures became involved in entrepreneurial pursuits after immigrating. Likewise, just under one-third of females who were previously involved in



entrepreneurial activities in Jamaica, became similarly involved in the U.K.

Scrutiny of the actual areas of businesses in the U.K. reveals that only three - the barber's and the two bakeries could be termed specifically 'ethnic' enterprises. The latter would be producing hard-dough bread, buns, patties etc, specifically for the Afro-Caribbean market, but increasingly being purchased by other groups, as people become more adventurous with their food. In the same way, the barber specialised in cutting Afro-Caribbean hair - predominantly males, but boasted that he had white clientele also, including, he stressed, a doctor from the hospital close to his barber shop.

When questioned about the outcome of their activities in the U.K., 80% of the males said their businesses had failed, while only 2% could boast success. Of the females 33% said their businesses failed, another third said it was difficult to determine the level of success. This was because they did sewing for private individuals and payments were irregular. In fact, it was due to this that they had felt it necessary to seek alternative forms of work intermittently. Both market stall holders (33%) felt their businesses were successful. One of these stall holders sold clothes and she attributed unqualified success to her business. The other holder sold Afro-Caribbean food, and although she said her business was successful, pointed out that at times she found it strenuous to make a living, competing against white market holders who also sold 'ethnic' food, and who she felt often resorted to under-cutting methods which she believed contributed to the lack of progress she was making.

Extracts from five case studies have been selected to indicate two successes and three failures as judged by respondents in their entrepreneurial pursuits. Extract A differs from the others in that rather than selling commodities or offering a service, the aim was specifically to own properties - this was to be the first of others. Not all the other four extracts chosen could, technically be regarded as typifying those which

would normally be included in the enclave economy sector. Secondly, although most of their clientele may have been people of their own ethnic group, the extent to which respondents set out with the intention of exploiting this market, it debatable, (this was not ascertained during the interviews - except for one occasion where a respondent stressed that 'Black people doesn't buy from Black people in dis country.' This sentiment - often expressed previously, was believed to be based on the belief that Afro-Caribbean people charged more for their goods. No serious studies have been undertaken to ascertain the fact behind this allegation. If, however, as the evidence from most respondents seem to confirm, proprietors from this ethnic group had to use their own savings or obtain expensive finance company loans to start their own businesses, it is not surprising that they were unable to engage in such price cutting exercises as the majority would be operating at a very low profit margin.

The enclave economy is capable of generating greater business success - at least in the short term - for ethnic minority groups than main-stream sector (a point which will be developed later); this being the case, we can assume that those respondents whose business enterprises fell within this category were afforded a slight fillip in their entrepreneurial involvement in the U.K. In order to obtain a fuller understanding of the types of businesses and the eventual outcome, we now turn to the respondents themselves for explanation.

1) Extract A

Respondent:	John Preece
Age:	49
Yr. of Arrival in U.K.	1955
Education	Elementary
Employment in Jamaica:	Carpenter
Employment in U.K.:	Factory labourer for six mths. then Carpentry.

In answer to my query about his entrepreneurial attempts in the U.K., Mr. Preece had this to say:-

I went into a business and lost all mi money. I lost a thousand pound.

We was trying to form a company ... and the head of it was in London..... We started very well and have one shop ... property like you know... buying property..... the bloke grab up all di money and declare bankruptcy.

We know dem from our own district back home ... it was quite a few of us really, ... 'bout thirty, an as far as I know, nobody get back any .... £1,000 each .... my brother ... was very much in it too. .... I dare say it would be more than £1,000 because I borrow some of the money from di bank and had was to pay everlasting interest on it. So it would be more than £1,000.

Mr. Preece would no doubt be classified as a member of the working-class and thus, he would more readily be placed amongst Hanson's penny capitalists than the petty bourgeoisie. And yet, the enterprise in which he became involved - that is, purchasing property - was certainly not a typical working class entrepreneurial pursuit. This is not the first time that respondents reported involvement in business ventures which could not be termed 'penny capitalism'.

These give validity to the view that, attempts to localise and predict attributes, and behavioural norms, to any particular group, may be conceptually flawed when applied to specific groups. This is particularly true of migrant labourers, who are often classified as appendages, and unwelcome ones, of the indigenous working-class. While in terms of remuneration and vulnerability to exploitation it is difficult to differentiate

them from the working class. Their heritage as rural land-owning peasant farmers, and artisans, owners of factors of production, controlling the rhythm of work, variations in the innovative ways in which they earn their living, and in several cases employing others, mean that their aspirations and actions, are often not strictly working-class, despite professed loyalties. It is, therefore, not surprising but must be seen very much as within the tradition, to find many of these respondents purchasing properties - even as member of a co-operative - in their attempts to exploit money making possibilities. These, however, are not like the 'sophisticated' form of capitalism where a moral obligation is often absent in pursuit of amassing a disproportionately higher return of capital for the initial outlay. Working class capitalists exploiting abilities are tempered by factors such as limitations of available resources, and the fact that often their markets are made up of friends, relatives and local people to whom they are well known and feel neighbourly obligations towards.

The extent to which the outcome of respondent A's business is a reflection of the lack of pertinent educational and experiential background, can only be surmised. Respondent said the business was declared bankrupt, but whether this was due to real business, management problems or fraud, is not known from the information given.

## 2) EXTRACT B

Respondent:	Thomas Leston
Age:	68
Yr. of Arrival in U.K.	1960
Education:	Elementary
Employment in Jamaica:	Agricultural Worker Baker
Employment in U.K.:	Bottle Stacking, Metal Grinding, Furnace Work

Mr. Leston attempted to start a bakery shortly after arriving in the country. He had gained experience in this trade, through his work in Jamaica. Unfortunately, he was forced to

about this effort after one month, after falling foul of the Law when he attempted to do the baking in his own home, using his domestic facilities. The neighbours reported him to the Department of the Environment which compelled him to cease this activity. Of this ill-fated attempt, the respondent said:-

I nevva inna di country so long, fi know di whole routine a di ting ...plenty frien seh I should start again.... But, as cording to how it was situate .... I (decided to) work in di factory.

I asked the respondent whether he had to borrow any money to start up that bakery, but he said he and a friend undertook the task. They didn't buy any special equipment, he said, as they were only making bun and bread, and using their own stove at home.

The above clearly reveals the extent to which lack of business knowledge - including operational restrictions, inhibited entrepreneurial endeavours.

Mr. Leston had been in a fortunate position to have expertise in one of the areas which could have thrived as an ethnic enclave business at a time when demand was virtually guaranteed. His expertise as a baker and the absence of many Afro-Caribbean bakeries, together with the fact that this area could not readily be supplied by existing indigenous suppliers, created an almost monopolistic market. The respondent very clearly realised the potential and hoped to utilise his expertise to exploit the situation.

While, undoubtedly, many similar businesses in various less developed countries are started that way, in Britain, the presence of legal environmental restriction and vigilant neighbours prevented this. Their effort, while revealing business naivety in the U.K. context, is no doubt similar to how respondents would have operated, had they attempted a similar exercise 'back home'. Mr. Leston and his friend attempted to start the business without resorting to external

sources of funding or advice. This too, is typical of working class entrepreneurial attempts in Jamaica.

Even with the knowledge and accessibility to sources of funding in the U.K., the extent to which these would have been utilised, is debatable. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the majority of those early migrant labourers did not come from a tradition of seeking funding externally, other than what could be achieved by working with a partner. Importantly, too, in 1960's Britain, information regarding possible business funding was not readily available to the working class would-be entrepreneur/capitalist.

### 3) EXTRACT C

Respondent:	Dolores Dara
Age:	57
Yr. of arrival in U.K.	1954
Education:	Elementary
Employment in Jamaica:	Asst. Cook in a Restaurant
Employment in U.K:	Grocery shop owner

I questioned Mrs. Dara about her business ventures in the U.K., to which she replied that she intermittently owned two grocery shops, one in Bordesley Green and later she closed that and opened another in Handsworth. The first was on the main Road, and the second in Murdoch Road, Handsworth - though not as focal as the first, nevertheless, in a reasonably busy thoroughfare.

Mrs. Dara said that she rented the premises in Bordesley Green and used their own savings to start the shop rather than seeking a loan. She also purchased a house in May Mills. The property in Handsworth had a house attached to it, so they obtained a loan from a finance company to purchase this property, but again, used their own savings to stock the shop.

Respondent said that in Bordesley Green she catered for the general public, rather than a purely Afro-Caribbean market.

She felt, however, that the Bordesley Green business did not do very well for reasons explained below:-

I suppose is because there wasn't many houses ... is mostly shops on di main road ... there wasn't many people living dere, an they don't really have to come dat way. And to be honest wid yu, black people doesn't support black people in dis country ... they don't.

In answer to my query about whether she had English people buying from her shop, she replied:-

Not a lot, odd one and two. I used to do mostly delivery ... because it wasn't bright .... then we have friends, so we get quite a few customers ... the one and two odd one dat come in, we had to deliver it, so then, by doing so, we get more. But den, dat's why we left and went over to Murdoch Road.

It was better ..... but I took ill an I had to left ... be at home, 'cause we had a house then, we bought another house over in May Mills. And then I was bad, an I was away for about three months, but then when I was a bit better, I had to close it down, because it was run-down.

My husband wasn't di business type, so then.... And then, as I said, even though dere was a lot of black people down dere, if they do come to span any money wid yu, they really moan because they said they can get it fi one-an-six doan di Indian. If yu selling it fi one-an-nine .... But they doesn't realise, even though di Indian seh one-an-six, he charging dem one-an-nine, because he weighs it on di scale an he charge dem more ... but deh doan know, yu si. I know dat's what they do to get their money, yu si. Some tings dat they sell cheap, deh mus get deh money back some way.... they have to do it some other way.

But our people doesn't support us. If deh do, deh have to moan an groan, yu know, an seh when yu go home yu guine show-off on dem ....

Respondent thinks she may try to open a paper or sweet shop later on. She would prefer to do this rather than open another grocery shop because-

Those tings, yu doan put the price on. When yu get sweets to buy, the price of someades is on the jar, or the bag ... dat's the retail price. Papers and tings like dat, the price is on the paper, so yu doan get no argument. But when you've got to buy things dat you have got to put the prices on, you're in trouble!

I would have made good progress in the one in Wandsworth, but because I was 'had', di ole man let it run down. ...I wasn't even better properly, I went back, but I couldn't do it on my own, because I wasn't better ... so I had vas to close it down.

I left from dere and went to find myself a job, and after I got di job I was only able to open it in di mornings and in di evenings. I let di little girl open it in di morning 'cause she was going to school over dat way, and when I finish work, I used to go over, but it gets a bit too much, so I just close it.

Mrs. Dere perceived herself to have fought a loosing battle against the adversities of an expensive finance company loan, unhelpful spouse, competition from local 'Indian' shop-keepers, lack of customer support generally and intense haggling from Afro-Caribbean customers (a traditional custom, though respondent believed they were tinged with petty jealousy). All these, coupled with illness, she believes were responsible for the decline of her business and its eventual failure.

#### 4) EXTRACT D

Respondent:	Sylvester Gill
Age:	52 (in 1984)
Yr. of Arrival in U.K.	1957
Education:	Elementary
Employment in Jamaica:	Farming and Barbering
Employment in U.K.:	Factory worker then Self-employed Barber

Mr. Gill opened his Barber Shop in 1981 so that he could become fully self-employed. What is of particular significance in this - as with other cases - is the dual/multi-disciplinary nature of his work activities. He had been cutting hair on a part-time basis previously, both in



Jamaica and the UK, while holding down a full time job. In the immigration periods of the 50s and 60s when most migrants' wages were very low, barbers like Mr. Gill, and other artisans who were able to provide a specialised service to their ethnic communities, benefited greatly. According to him:-

I used to do it part-time when I was working at Guest Keen for sixteen years ... so I have mi two job.

When I was on early morning at Guest Keen, I finish at 2.00 an I am here at di shop by half past two ... an I go on until about 6 - 7 ... sometimes 8.00 ... and sometimes after 8.00!

When I'm on afternoons, I get sleep ... I open 9.00 O'clock until roughly half one/quarter to two, to reach work fi two O'clock, an I work until half nine. So I used to do at least twelve, thirteen, fourteen hours a day! Sixteen years! An di last of it, I tink it was killing me, an I finally decide mi mind seh, "one time yu pass dis worl, so finish wid one job, an when I was coming out of Guest Keen I smile"

Mr. Gill said he had no regrets, and that his customers came from every nationality, English, Chinese, Indians, West Indians. He said he had slight problems but that's to be expected. He further stressed:-

I feel more at ease .... I go home every night at a decent time ... between about 8.00 O'clock. Mi food (eating time) ... it's more accurate, (unlike) when yu do shifts .... Feel better health wise. I used to be that tired that when I go home and as I have something to eat an look at the television for di longest 15 to 20 minutes ... I'm off sleeping.

Mr. Gill said he used his personal savings in the U.K. to start his business. (He also referred to the fact that he had sent to Jamaica for £1,100) because, as he said, he did not believe in hire purchase - though he accepts that for large purchases like a car, it may be necessary. He believes he will expand if he has the money.

5) EXTRACT 2

Respondent:	Agnes Fraser
Age:	55
Yr. of Arrival in U.K.	1960
Education:	Elementary
Employment in Jamaica:	Domestic work, Buying and Selling

Mrs. Fraser only worked for a very short time in the U.K. due to her having children and staying at home to rear them. When her husband was made redundant, she used £60 of his redundancy money to set up a stall in Birmingham's largest market, selling Afro-Caribbean dry food. She has never borrowed any money to assist in her business.

Mrs. Fraser said her business was successful. This has to be qualified, however, because 'success' appeared to have been measured more on the fact that she had managed to keep the business going, rather than allow it to fold. When asked whether she was satisfied with the progress the business was making, respondent replied:-

No ... but ... we'll eat in Grace. If I did have a brighter sale ... if I did get more support from the West Indies community.

A White chap in di market dat sell West Indian food ... We start before us, and sometime people will tell you how he handle the West Indians dem ... (but) deh crowd him ... he will even sell ten box a yea when you doan sell one.

We used to sell ... cheaper... we complain to the market man ... they doan find out how much he sell it for. We try to compete with him, yu know, to save di sale.

I asked Mrs. Fraser whether she had actively encouraged people to purchase from her and she said no, although it's more than likely she would at least have shouted out her wares to customers, while she did higglering in Jamaica - (buying and selling).

It is interesting to note that once again, respondent expressed the belief that people of her own ethnic group do not give the degree of support she expects. It is clear that they almost all tended to assume the patronage of people of their own ethnic groups - to the extent that no attempts were made to actively woo either them, or people from other groups. If Afro-Caribbean proprietors had a monopoly on their food trade, this may have been logical. Bearing in mind however, the fact that the wholesalers and largest retailers both in the markets and the local shops are nearly always white, or from one of the South East Asian groups, many comparatively more able to offer price cuts, such views are bound to lead to disappointments. Unfortunately, the rules of a capitalist market economy dictate that buyers will seek out the most competitive price and in these instances - comprador affinity wanes. Further, as is mentioned later, many so called 'Indian' shop-keepers who are believed to be attracting the customers - are themselves barely making a profit.

It would seem, then, that in order to increase sales it would have been necessary for these small business proprietors to cater for a much wider market than their own ethnic group. This however, is easier said than done because there are several factors beyond the control of proprietors, which determine where and with whom people will shop. The problem of course is compounded when racism becomes a significant factor. It is pertinent then, at this stage to examine the extent to which 'going into business' can really be regarded as a positive tool in the fight for equity for black people.

#### **Black Businesses for Black Independence?**

In his work on Black Capitalism, Earl Ofari had this to say:-

Black people have the weakest commercial tradition of any people in the United States. For historical reasons, including alienation from the capitalist system and from their African communal tradition, they have been little

attracted to trade shopkeeping, buying and selling, or employing labor for the purpose of exploitation.... The black masses have rarely shown an interest in black capitalism as a solution.

Future programs for black liberation definitely should not include capitalism in any form.<sup>[18]</sup>

While this might be a true representation of the Black American case, it is not the exact historical reality for Black people of the Caribbean. Even during slavery, slaves were encouraged to keep their own vegetable gardens - in their masters attempt to cut down on food bills. Through this practice they were able to sell surplus and accumulate funds - even for a few to purchase their freedom. Again, with Emancipation, freed slaves squatted on Crown lands and were able to market excess produce which they cultivated. In addition, there was always an artisan group such as carpenters, croupiers etc, who were able to engage in limited entrepreneurial activities.

For Ofari, however, probably the most crucial factor, is his belief that Black capitalism is a diversion from the real struggle - that is devising strategies whereby all working classes 'can benefit from the fruits of their labor' rather than adopting a system which historically has proved itself to be parasitic for the majority of people.

The above view is in stark contrast to the beliefs of Lord Scarman, who felt that black business development was a panacea for much of the ailment suffered by black people in Britain... be it a sense of under-achievement, alienation or as a defence against white racism. In his report, Scarman wrote:-

The encouragement of black people to secure a real stake in their own community, through business and the professions, is in my view of great importance if future social stability is to be secured... I do urge the necessity for speedy action if we are to avoid the perpetuation in this country of an economically

dispossessed black population. A weakness in British society is that there are too few people of West Indian origin in the business, entrepreneurial and professional class. (19)

Scarsen's views are increasingly repeated especially in the strong capitalist climate of Thatcher's Britain. The government has been encouraging the population at large to 'set up on their own', to combat unemployment. For Afro-Caribbean people, the pressure for them to prove their 'worth' has never been more intense, and the medium of business enterprise is the chosen test factor. In this area, the former are continually unfavourably compared with 'The Asians'.

Some Pan-Africanist adherents argue that it is only through separate development of a strong economic base, will black people begin to redress the negative power relationship between themselves and the larger predominantly racist white society. Many black people are caught up in the peranoia of a need to display 'black success'. However, this co-option of Thatcherite ideology, that business success is a measure of individual/group worth, implicitly results in the acceptance of the converse; in other words, inability to display overt business success is a sign of individual or group failure.

Apologetic black people and their 'liberal/socialist minded' white 'compradors', on the other hand, are quick to point out in defence, that black people from the Caribbean have not had a tradition of the type of individualistic capitalism practiced in most advanced economies and that forms of co-operative capitalism might be more successful. Here, Afro-Caribbean people would be able to develop their own capitalist institutions without having to be controlled by, or compete with white or 'Asians'.

Today's call for individual responsibility and self-determinism is made by the government with the knowledge that the world seems inevitably bound to undergo extensive changes

in this post-industrial era. As with capitalist industrial birth, its demise will cause intense social distress through economic dislocations. Some of these are evidenced in the phenomenon of 'a divided nation' whereby in Britain there are regional pockets of obvious material wealth, juxtaposed by others in advanced stages of industrial urban decay.

Mindful of the need to address the economic and social degradation of today's inner cities, for fear of the 'rot seeping outwards into white suburbia, the Conservative government have embarked on a series of 'urban aid programmes' [20]. It is necessary, however to question the premise on which these initiatives are implemented. On the one hand they could be seen as concern for regeneration of the physical environment (within the British Heritage mould). In these circumstances, capital spin-off effects for the people living in these areas are incidental (though, of course, in the classical economic mould, government spending on public property, is bound to have a positive spin-off effect for workers through the additional employment opportunities created). Alternatively, on the surface, many Inner Cities initiatives can be regarded as hand-holding/carrot exercises, with the intention of encouraging/prodding people towards the goals of self-determinism and individual enterprise. Neither of the above are necessarily mutually exclusive.

However, any initiative which does not seriously address structural and institutional factors which create or exacerbate social and economic problems, and perpetuate under-development of certain groups of people because of their, class, ethnic origin or gender, is bound to be less effective than it could potentially be.

In fact, these initiatives can exacerbate the problems of lack of employment in Inner City areas, especially through the absence of safe-guarding mechanisms such as the legalisation of contract compliance.

Much is discussed about the millions of pounds supposedly pumped into these areas, yet no serious attempt is made by the government to address the problem which is created when local

workers are denied employment because contractors transport in their own employees, or recruit workers from outside the area. Ignorance of the dynamics involved leads to accusations about money being 'pumped' into certain areas without success. This results in faulty generalisations, which often interprets 'failures' as 'something biologically lacking' in the inhabitants - in this case, the majority of black, un/under employed inner city dwellers.

Importantly too, 'carrots', are invariably associated with 'sticks', and contrived or not, the present contraction of social welfare provision and retraction of governmental obligations performs a 'stick' role. These, together with mass unemployment, will lead to intense frustrations and hardships, and are intended to force people to devise their own plans in order to relieve personal hardships. At the same time, however, while abnegating social welfare responsibilities - the Government calls for a return to the Christian virtues of the 19th century. This call must be viewed in context with the concern for individualism and protection of property in the midst of a growing gulf between the level of materialism of the haves and have nots.

A 19th century predecessor of the government was mindful of the potential for social unrest through the assistance of rich juxtaposed by poor inter/intra regional variations. Thus while philosophising in an attempt to validate their 'right' not to become their 'brother's keepers', they also devised Laws to protect and uphold the sanctity of property. In any eventuality, State compulsion was to be effected in an attempt to get people to shoulder their own responsibilities. Consequently, the 1834 New Poor Law was enacted.

Government assumed the barest responsibility for social welfare, only when would-be recipients had been totally degraded by the ravages of poverty. The extent of relief, and conditions under which assistance was given, further de-humanised the individual to make the deterrence more effective.

Why this preoccupation with the foregone century? The agenda has been set by the present Conservative government, and it is crucial to understand the ramifications of this in relation to black people who form a virtual sub-class in the British society.

19th century capitalism - for which Mrs. Thatcher so long - was ushered in by the 'Christian' capitalist pioneering entrepreneurs of the 17th and 18th centuries, aided by the mass of resources which Europeans were able to amass through militaristic expropriation, in large parts of the rest of the world. Through the work of Max Weber we are made to believe that their engagement in economic pursuits were goaded on by an intensity that only strong emotions like fear could instil. Fear that under-achievement or failure was a sure sign of God's dis-satisfaction, whereas success was a sign of Divine approval. Approval could only be gained by good works within individuals' specific 'calling'. This latter part is of particular relevance, for it was this which should pacify those who, despite hard and laborious work, were unable to reap similar benefits which the 'business person' reaps. If they could not achieve - it was either that God was displeased with them, or they were striving outside of their 'calling'.

It was opportune for the capitalists and government of the day that people accepted these doctrines. While, according to Marx, they acted as an opiate against the harshest realities of poor people's existence, they were also a protection mechanism for those who were conspicuously making large profits against a back-drop of intense economic and social hardships for the majority of people.



### Conclusion

The above case studies and extracts have revealed that Afro-Caribbean migrant labourers seemed to have been 'normal' if normalcy is measured by the level of enterprise - that is - devising strategies to make a living for themselves. Respondents through their own words have told how, like people all over the world, they have either used the skills they had, or were forced to use initiative to devise schemes in order to be self-sufficient or 'improve themselves'. As far as exhibiting ingenuity, people like Mrs. Talloch (Case Study 1), seemed to be second to none and like a seasoned petty capitalist had certainly managed to display worthy stewardship. Many had attempted to reproduce their business enterprises in the U.K. with varying successes.

It is relevant here to listen to Susan Nowikowski as she quotes Light (1972:8):

Far from expressing any 'natural aptitude' for commerce, self-employment was often the sole resource for workers subject to extreme economic oppression.<sup>[21]</sup>

Light regarded the early development of Chinese small businesses in the U.K. as 'monuments to the discrimination that had created them.' In concluding her work on Asian businesses too, Nowikowski was forced to stress:-

Asian business activity represents a truce with racial inequality rather than a victory over it. Despite the facade of self-determination erected by group entrepreneurs, in reality, going into business does little to change the status of group members in relation to majority society ; as with members of the majority society, it simply allows a small minority to exchange the role of marginal worker for that of marginal proprietor.<sup>[22]</sup>

One aspect of the 'enclave economy' which needs to be addressed is the extent to which they create experiential and promotional opportunities for individuals in their group,

through 'reciprocal obligations.' Portes and Bach, stressed that:-

If employers can profit from the willing self-exploitation of fellow immigrants, they are also obliged to reserve for them those supervisory positions that open in their firms, to train them in trade skills and to support their eventual move into self-employment. It is the fact that enclave firms are compelled to rely on ethnic solidarity and that the latter 'cuts both ways,' which creates opportunities for mobility unavailable in the outside<sup>[23]</sup>

While discussing the enclave economy and its relationship to the spread of Asian businesses, Naevus and Ward failed to indicate the role of the enclave economy in enhancing the occupational promotion of Asians. While it is not intended to denigrate the achievements of this group of people, one needs to be careful that the minority ethnic group's own constructs are not used to cloak a general trend of discrimination and inequality.

If the above quotation is taken as given, certain pertinent points need to be addressed. Firstly to what extent does promotion and experience gained through these avenues provide currency in negotiations for similar positions in the wider society? Secondly to what extent does the need for cross organisational negotiations inhibit reciprocal obligations between workers and owners in the enclave economy. For example, many 'ethnic' organisations in Britain have resorted to 'fronting' their businesses with white indigenous personnel in an attempt to attract custom from the main communities. The extent to which this is exploited in higher positions could determine the degree of promotional/experiential mobility afforded ethnic minority workers in enclave sectors. This point becomes more crucial when one considers that most of the top level business negotiations are clinched in informal gatherings/settings. Consequently, one could assume that until the principles of Equality of Opportunities are widely and non-judicially observed, much of the progress of ones business depends on devising strategies either to circumvent such dependency or to gain access to these

gatherings. This, however, has remained an elusive quest for many professional/business magnates from indigenous working class backgrounds, such more those from ethnic minority groups.

Unless these concerns can be answered positively, the enclave economy must be seen at best as:- "a survival strategy initiated from a location of disadvantage, and manipulating the limited resources of this position."<sup>[24]</sup> Much worse, however, it can be seen as further ghettoisation of ethnic minority groups and can be held responsible for assisting in the perpetuation of inequality of opportunities for these groups, by failing to radically confront the parameters set by main-stream capitalism. For according to Ladbury:-

The revival of the small business ethic by the government cannot therefore be explained solely in economic terms. Initial moves to implement a Small Business Policy in 1980 and 1981 suggest that the government's real concerns were not small business per se, but those on the economic periphery - blacks, for example, and those recently made redundant as a result of massive plant closures in the manufacturing industry. .... the main objective of the government's Small Business Policy was to win over those most likely to feel disaffected with, and directly impoverished by, Tory economic policy.<sup>[25]</sup>

The sticks applied by the Conservative government of the 1980's has the potential to be even harsher than those over a century ago. This is because the quality of life and indeed expectations then, are vastly different to those which today's individuals have been socialised to expect as the barest necessity for humane existence. Even with the removal of 'protection' against low pay and other forms of capitalist exploitation, the ill effects of this is cushioned by the fact that credit and loan facilities have expanded with government sanction. This, together with the existence of social welfare provision by the State, has hitherto tended to engender a sense of security against the worst distresses of poverty.

Secondly, opportunities for setting up in business - whether through some kind of artisanship or service industry,

presupposes the existence of an 'opportunities vacuum' capable of absorbing industries' human capital wastage, as exists amongst the mass un/under employed casualties of the world economic system. We are told that due to contraction of the industrial sector, 'Service', especially in the area of technology, will be the foreign capital generator of the late 1980's and in the foreseeable future. And yet, lessons learnt in both World Wars have shown how transient economic endeavours are, if based on providing 'service'. This sector is often the most commonly mechanised, thereby replacing manual labour. Further the machine producing sectors in the service industry, are often easy prey to foreign competition. If the service is of strategic importance or has the potential of yielding high profits, these in themselves will encourage competition and in their turn either encourage fragmentation to the extent that it is no longer economically viable to provide said service - as it will encourage cartel/syndicate formations. In both such eventualities the working-class proprietors will lose service transactions. Further, in periods of political and economic upheavals, most service transactions are often curtailed.

Assuming, however, that the late 80s indeed proves to be the beginning of an era of international stability in the political arena, and that Britain is successful in leading the world in the business of 'service technology'. Now, one is forced to ask would this affect the quest for national and international black capitalism when black people in Britain - for various reasons - have remained unable to gain access to high levels of technological education and skills? To what extent is black capitalism a solution to the struggle for equity and, to borrow a topical phrase - 'self-determination' - within the national and international struggles for equality of opportunities and liberation? Further, what kinds of adjustments would necessarily have to be made if British Black people are to be afforded a chance to compete fairly in these areas?

Finally, it may be logical to argue that particularly in a non-communist state individuals of every ethnic group will be seen to operate in capitalistic ways, whether these are validated by terms like 'enterprising' 'bettering oneself' etc. However, any attempt by the government, or other organised bodies to encourage these along ethnic lines, will be reinforcing ethnic cleavages and maintaining the present inequitable status quo. This is especially so when in Britain, none of the parliamentary parties have so far seemed keen to tackle the main problem of racism which is largely responsible for the lack of progress of Afro-Caribbean peoples in the U.K. Even to clear thinking capitalists this makes sense, hence the 'Economist' - is seen to plead:-

The government plans a stringent fair-employment law for Northern Ireland, which will soon make it illegal not to try to employ a fair percentage of Catholics. It could use it as a model for helping British blacks.

If the government were seen to attack racism more effectively, it could afford to point to ways Britain's blacks could help themselves.[26]

## Footnotes - Chapter 7

- [1] Ward, R. and Reeves, F. : West Indian business in Britain- Ethnic Communities in business ed. R. Ward & R. Jenkins. Pbn. Cambridge University Press, London (1984)
- [2] Kennedy, Carol. : The entrepreneurs, Vol.2. Pbn. Scope Books, Newbury (1980).
- [3] Aitkin, Hugh. : Explorations in Enterprise. Pbn. Harvard University Press, Massachusetts (1987)
- [4] Aitkin, opcit - (P. 203-4)
- [5] See Flinn as cited in Payne, P.L. : British entrepreneurs in the nineteenth century. Pbn. Macmillan, London (1974 : 14).
- [6] Payne, P.L. - Opcit
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] Benson, John The Penny Capitalist, a study of nineteenth-century working-class entrepreneurs. Pbn. Gill and Macmillan, Dublin (1983 : 4-5)
- [9] Ibid
- [10] Ibid
- [11] Ibid
- [12] Rosovsky, Henry : The Serf Entrepreneur in Russia- Explorations in enterprise ed. Aitken, H. op.cit
- [13] Ibid (P. 342)
- [14] This latter point is not insignificant in the Jamaican context, as in periods of the most intense economic decline, it's the higglers and other small entrepreneurs who become bastions of the economy.
- [15] Reeves & Ward - cited opcit (P. 134)
- [16] Evans Report : Education for all - Great Britain. Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups, DES. H.M.S.O. (1985)
- [17] Eggleston, J. : The educational and vocational experiences of 13-18 year old young people of minority ethnic groups, a report submitted to the Department of Education and Science. Department of Education, University of Keele, (1984).
- [18] Ofari, Earl : The myth of black capitalism. Pbn. Monthly review P. London (1970 : 10)
- [19] Lord Scarman Report : The Bristol disorders 10-12 April 1981 - report of an inquiry. Pbn. Penguin, Harmondsworth (1982).
- [20] For further information, see: Ladbury, Sarah, (Pp.105) : Choice, chance or no alternative? Turkish Cypriots in business in London. Cited in Ethnic communities in business - Strategies for economic survival. Ed. Robin Ward & Richard Jenkins. (1984) Pbn. Cambridge University Press, London
- [21] Nowikowski, Susan : Snakes and Ladders: Asian business in Britain (1984 : 208-209)- Ethnic Communities in business. Ed. R.Ward & R.Jenkins. Pbn. Cambridge University Press, London (1984)
- [22] Ibid.

- [23] Portes, A. and Bach, R. : Latin Journey. Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the United States. Pbm. University of California Press, Berkeley, London (1985 : 343)
- [24] Susan Mowlowski, (1984 : 149).
- [25] Ledbury, R. - Cited opcit. (Pp.105)
- [26] The Economist : August 27th, (1988 : 14)

**CHAPTER 2****'SETTLIN AND SURVIVIN IN A****STRANGE LAN'****Introduction**

In chapter 6, it was indicated that the employment vacuum in the West Midlands was created by the exodus of skilled and white collar workers to suburban residential areas. The regions' re-development plan and industrial decentralisation meant that to some extent commuting to inner cities areas were reduced; this was particularly so for unskilled labour. By the late 1940's, therefore, Birmingham's, like most cities' spatial redistribution of residential areas were characterised by a rapidly expanding detached and semi-detached suburbia housing schemes, accompanied by Public schemes, largely in inner ring areas - though later on in the 1960's, there was an attempt to build over-spill working class housing in rural areas. These were largely to rehouse residents - refugees from clearance schemes of the most notorious slums. According to Rex, 'Most English families, therefore, came to expect an improvement of their housing condition either through mortgages provided by building societies or through getting on the list of Council housing' [1] Unfortunately, however, neither of these schemes were readily available to New Commonwealth migrants, due to a 'waiting list' regulation for public housing, and discrimination from mortgage vendors.

This section of the study focusses on the settlement experiences of WMID in Birmingham and surrounding areas. From respondents own information a relatively lucid picture should emerge, indicating the extent to which WMID respondents have become integrated formally and informally



in community structures, and factors which have contributed to 'settlement' juxtaposed with re-migration aims.

#### Settlement and Housing arrangements

A study undertaken by Bournville Village Trust in 1941,<sup>[2]</sup> pre-empting post-war rebuilding, had stressed that 64% of Birmingham's 288,608 dwelling houses were of pre-1914 construction. In 1938 the Medical Officer of Health had reported that '17,500 houses were unfit for human habitation and ought to be demolished within the next five years.' The study went on to stress that 'Many unofficial observers would regard this figure as too low. On a broader definition of the term "unfit for human habitation", there can be no difficulty in justifying some such number as 50,000 to 70,000 dwellings as being ripe for demolition as soon as the necessary houses can be built to replace them'

In 1955 local authorities in the UK had estimated that 853,000 was representative of the total of unfit houses in their ward. By 1967, however, a housing survey of England and Wales reported of Birmingham alone, '30,000 families are on the waiting list, and 6,500 families apply each year. Over 50,000 people are overcrowded, over 40,000 homes are unfit for human habitation, and nearly 60,000 households have no access to a hot water tap.'<sup>[3]</sup> From the above it seems then that slums were forming at an alarming rate; certainly faster than they could be replaced.

On a national level, the situation was similar - in places even worse than Birmingham. As late as 1966 a Labour Party White Paper stated that:-

In Great Britain some three million families still live in slums, near slums, or in grossly overcrowded conditions.<sup>[4]</sup>

The paper further stressed that to rectify the severe housing shortage problem, 3,700,000 houses were needed immediately and that a further 180,000 houses each year

would be needed. The severity of the problem was to be emphasised even more when a housing survey of England and Wales, in 1967 indicated that no less than 8.5 million people lived in houses "unfit for human habitation". Further, it stressed that an additional 13 to 14 million people lived in sub-standard housing - some requiring demolition. In short, it appears that "40% of dwellings in England and Wales were either totally unfit or sub-standard, or lacking amenities." [5] (Dee Wilson : 1970).

It was this situation into which post-war migrant labourers came. The short-fall between supply and demand, and the fact that there was no attempt to organise housing for the immigrant labourers, resulted in 'New Commonwealth' migrant workers experiencing some of the worst effects of inadequate housing provision. As this shortage exposed the newcomers' plight and the need for government action, it was used to fuel racist allegations. This is because of the tendency to equate macro housing shortage with perceived micro welfare requirements; thus John Grieve's, assertion on the homeless in London during the early 1960's, has universal relevance:-

When the homeless become a topic for public discussion, accusation and counter-accusation, there is debate and speculation as to whether the homeless are 'feckless ne'er do wells' or 'ordinary decent Londoners'. There are echoes here of the Victorian insistence upon the distinction between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. The research team found that the homeless were more likely to be decent than ne'er do well, but, in any case, there is little point - or humanity - in attempting to separate the victimised from the feckless and unvirtuous if the object is to help one but not the others. [6]

Social destitution, therefore, as is universally the case, had little to do with individual fecklessness for the majority of inadequately housed people. That the housing 'problem' was exacerbated with the arrival of post-war labour migrants, is a reflection of the short-sightedness of the local and national governments to maintain an adequate

house building/renewal programme. This, as has been shown, had been the case from the previous century.

Altruism - coupled with a sense of obligation towards one's compatriots was characteristic of early Afro-Caribbean migrant workers; thus finding jobs and offering accommodation both for relations and friends were not considered to be extra-ordinary requirements. The fact that this extension of humanitarianism often created over-crowding and led to allegations of ghettoisation, was more an indictment on the receiving localities - be it landlords/ladies who had rooms but refused to let to black people, or the local authority who discriminated against its local poorer inhabitants by providing inadequate and insufficient housing and further compounding this by preventing black people from gaining equal access to good public housing.

Because of requirements such as joining waiting lists, and preferential treatment depending on residence within the area, Black people were forced to purchase almost derelict property as there were few, reasonably priced properties available to them. From the inception, therefore, poor residential facilities characterised Black people's community areas.

In response to allegations about black people turning areas into ghettos, Mr. Bates (a WMID respondent), had this to say:-

... the ghetto situation was there before we came here. When Jamaicans or West Indians came here first ... people with better housing accommodation would not rent you ... therefore you had to go into the run-down properties.

And the other thing is, if I have a brother or a cousin or a relative, they would want to live around my area....(if) I go into the street and I see a Jamaican with a grip or something, just come from Jamaica and hasn't got anywhere to go - I'm not going to say well, this place is over-crowded and therefore you have to

sleep on the street" ... you'd have to take him in. That is how this whole situation arises.

I got a story off a person, he told me he was living in Sparkhill and at about 3.00 a.m. in the morning he heard somebody knock on his door and when he came out, he saw this taxi driving away, and this black man on his doorstep. He didn't know him ... he'd never seen him before, but this taxi bloke just picked him up in the street, just come from Jamaica, and he knows that he's a Jamaican living there and he just carry him and dump him there. Now, what could that man do? ... they just take him in.

This story confirms a point which was made earlier, that is that taxi drivers appeared to have played a crucial role in assisting new-comers to find initial accommodation. Mr. Raydon's story below, bears witness to the fact that this way of obtaining residence, was certainly not A-typical. He reminisced about his arrival in Birmingham as follows:-

... I reach Birmingham about 3 to 4.00 O'Clock in the evening ... I want to call a taxi ... so I said to him .. I want you to drop me at a coloured man house. So he laughed ... he said 'coloured man house?' I said yes ... He said, I don't know any ... but anyway, you can come in the taxi ... I will find one.

So I went in the taxi, and he drive until he reach a police man ... on the street ... keeping duty ... because those days you never have so many stop light ... So he stopped the taxi and walked up to the policeman and said something to him ... well, surprisingly, the police man take out a pocket book ... and he turned over a leaf and say something to him ... and him come back in the taxi and he said, yes I'm going to drop you at a coloured man house. He drop me at 310 Dudley Road.

Mr. Bates, interestingly blames the governments in both the sending and receiving country for this state of affairs. He stressed that:-

There was no proper liaison between our governments and this government as far as accommodation is concerned, the type of jobs, or the types of people. No matter how you take it, we are all ambassadors when we leave our country, therefore, the type of people that come in, reflect the type of society that we live in back home. I think there should be proper liaison between the two countries.

Some of the Caribbean governments did attempt to prepare their citizens for life in the UK, by issuing information booklets such as the one from Barbados listed as Appendix B.1 (7). It is significant to note that while would-be migrants were admonished to obtain lodgings before leaving home, no mention was made of the actual types of accommodation available. For many people the extent of dereliction and over-crowdedness they were forced to endure caused acute distress. For WWID respondents, this distress seemed to have been greatest for those who came straight from a rural background, where their easier access to primary building material such as wood, clay and roof thatching material, even for wattle and daub housing, meant that their houses may have been spartan but enabled inhabitants to maintain some degree of privacy and independence.

This point is expressed most poignantly by Mr. Forrester a former peasant farmer and in his own words 'a competent sawyer' and shingle-maker, who left Jamaica as a married man with three children. In explaining why he came to England, he said:-

I see everybody travelling and travelling and travelling; I says, but why should I stay and killing meself in di earth ... I says,... just as cheap meself go look what'm going on! It better yu si fi yuself more den somebody tell yu.

He arrived in the UK 1955 - recruited by his brother who sent him fare. Mr. Forrester then lived in Smethwick in the same house as his brother which was owned by another Black man, and according to him 'plenty of us lived there - four

people in one room'. He explained the domestic organisation of the house as follows:-

One kitchen, but yu have yu time to do yu cooking. When it come to the line of bathing, yu go to the public bath ... there wasn't a bathroom. (clothes were taken to the laundry for washing).

This appeared to have been a traumatic experience for him as he stressed:-

... when I came to Englan here, I cry fi three months straight, is truth! ... I cry fi three months straight. And di reason why I cry .. when I came here they have four beds in one room .. an all dem sort a way! ... I mean I did feel it.

...I was doing me farming an I didn't do badly to dat. When I was leaving Jamaica, I leave 16,000 hill a yellow yam in one piece ... and when I leaving Jamaica, date the time food start to sell .. all £3.00 a cwt fi yellow yam!

But afta I come up now ... an get used to the people I just find meself hosely.

This resignation with which Mr. Forrester concluded, is characteristic of migrants in any country. It marks the psychological restructuring stage which enables individuals to begin to create supporting structures within the narrow confines of their existence - be these in the ghettos, or other forms of hostile environments. In this regard, Piora quotes a Social worker in New York who said of Latin American migrants:-

You get five or six guys living together, sometimes ten. The places are a mess - they'd never live that way at home - but they work all the time. People sleep in shifts and nobody cleans or cooks.<sup>[8]</sup>

These people, according to Piora are characteristic of migrants in various parts of the world who 'are divorced from a social setting, operating outside the constraints and inhibitions that it imposes, working totally and exclusively for money.'<sup>[9]</sup>

Picra's observations below is as true of residential location as it is of work, and importantly is applicable to labour migrants generally:-

The individual's social identity is located in the place of origin, the home community. The migration to the industrial community and the work performed there is purely instrumental: a means to gather income, income that can be taken back to his or her home community and used to fulfill or enhance his or her role within that social structure. (Thus, as one Mexican, who worked frequently in the United States, put it ... "I work there: Then at home, I am king." (Likewise), the Puerto Rican explaining "If I'm going to do that sort of work, I'd rather do it over there. Then I can come home and be myself." (10)

An error which indigenous observers often make is their tendency to equate the bad conditions in which immigrant groups often live, as being characteristic of condition with which they are accustomed. This is often extended to feed racist expositions about their cultural/ethnic make-up and preference. Such conclusions are at best based on ignorance of the dynamic factors involved in the migration processes - especially while the possibility of imminent return is a viable outcome. At worst, they are based on racist pre-suppositions and an inability to accord responsibility to the receiving locality. In the case of black immigrants, often they were not presented with a choice, as prejudices ensured that they were only offered poor housing which were usually more expensive than the going rate.

Where better housing was available decision to acquire this was often set against needs, often emanating from the sending country - whether they involved remitting to families and friends, or the need to finance projects such as land and house purchases, schooling children or developing any of the multifarious business enterprises whose viability emigration now made possible.

There appears to be an inverse relationship between the quality of their lives in the receiving country and migrants level of saving and remittances - whether in cash or kind.

This same motivation for capital accumulation is behind Simon Jenkins observations that Indians in Leamington Spa 'Own more than one property and even let to English tenants, often preferring to stay in the less prosperous areas of town in order to derive rent income rather than move out to live alone with their families in a single house.' [11]

Of course, there were those who were conscious of a positive side to the above adversities. For example comradeship and kinship support has been stressed by several commentators of immigrant settlements. Often, in multi-occupied houses, visitors for one tenant could find that there were others living there who although they may not know them personally, came from the same parish, thus friendship and acquaintant rings could be expanded and isolation and loneliness prevented. It is this fear of loneliness, which is believed to be behind some first generation Black people's unwillingness to accept council houses - which are away from easy access to the Afro-Caribbean communities. Mr. Bates, (referred to earlier) felt that discussions about dispersal should be tempered with the knowledge of the dynamics of these settlement communities. He had this to say of such communities:-

I was at a Labour Party meeting once and they were talking about this (dispersal) policy, and I said I was against it in principle. They asked me why and I said, if you go to Kingston, in my country, you see all the white people live up in St. Andrew, you have the Chinese live in Barry Street, the Indians live out Spanish Town Road, and there is a reason for it. People feel more protected when they are among their own - I wouldn't want to go into (Solihull) to live because I wouldn't be accepted there, so I'd feel threatened and therefore you find any part of the world you go, people of the same culture or from the same country or whatever, tend to stick together.

I agree with the principle that there should be a dispersive quality, but where are you going to disperse us to? Are you going to put us in an area where you know that the people are hostile to us? Or on the other hand, are you going to put us in rundown properties? [12]



To Mr. Bates, then, it is natural that people would want to live close to others of their own ethnic group. It is significant that he spoke of residential division along race instead of class lines. The rationale for this, he suggests, is the need for protection, hence, an indication of a perceived cross-ethnic conflict situation. In Jamaica, however, unlike other ex-colonial territories, there has been no overt racial conflicts since the period of slavery. Nevertheless, the present situation is obviously, partly a relic of colonialism. At the time when most WMID respondents left home, there were undoubtedly 'white people's quarters', in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean. To a certain extent, therefore, racially segregated residence was not new to the Afro-Caribbean on his/her arrival in Britain. In fact, it is true to say that this had been the sum total of the residential experience for most people from that part of the region; even on occasions when they left the country to engage in contract work in other parts of the Americas, they were usually housed separately; these contrived to provide an absence of racially motivated residential tension.

One difference between the Caribbean and the UK, however, is that, in the former, professionals and other money facilitated upwardly mobile Black people, are accorded cross-ethnic preferences, including residential; a phenomenon often referred to in the Caribbean as 'money whitening'. In Britain, however, although there has been a trickle of Black professionals moving out to white residential areas, often they are repelled by a discriminating combination of estate agents, mortgage providers, and house owners.

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### Forced and Voluntary Incapsulation

To a large extent, first generation Afro-Caribbean labour migrants to the UK are destined to remain in Britain as 'reluctant settlers'. This is due to their state of alienation and incapsulation - voluntary and involuntary - as a result of factors real and imagined, emanating from the British society, as well as from the Caribbean. Although it appears that unlike the various 'Asian' groups, workers from the Caribbean were formally distributed in factories in a way which would force interaction with white groups; even with the absence of a 'language deterrance', most respondents in the study confessed to mixing only or mostly with people from Jamaica, in particular, and the West Indies generally, during their non-working periods both within and outside the work place.

The Map below Fig. 8 [a] shows the main residential areas of New Commonwealth immigrants in Birmingham - the areas from which most WMID respondents were drawn. These are largely in the older, inner ring areas of the region, and despite urban renewal programmes of the late 1970s/early 1980s, housing conditions and the general state of poverty is still chronic, as is evidenced in Appendix 8 (1).

Tables 8 : 1 and 8 : 2, below reveals the residential locations of WMID respondents from the time of their arrival in the country to the time of interview - which, for some spanned a period of over thirty years.

**TABLE 2.1**  
**AREAS OF RESIDENCE IN THE UK**  
**FEMALES**

Respondent	1st Location	Secondary Locations
1	Edgbaston	Edgbaston
2	Edgbaston	Edgbaston, Spring Mill
3	London	London, Bristol, Birmingham
4	Ladywood	Mockley, Edgbaston, Sparkbrook
5	Edgbaston	Edgbaston
6	Edgbaston	Balsall Heath, Spring Mill
7	Bordesley Green	Mansworth, Edgbaston
8	Edgbaston	Langley, Bearwood
9	Smethwick	Smethwick, Edgbaston
10	Balsall Heath	Balsall Heath
11	Mansworth	Mansworth
12	Erdington	Aston
13	Mansworth	Mansworth, West Bromwich
14	Erdington	Edgbaston
15	Mansworth	Mansworth
16	Smethwick	Edgbaston
17	Mansworth	Mansworth
18	Oldbury	Blackheath
19	Mockley	Mansworth
20	Smethwick	Smethwick
21	Edgbaston	Edgbaston

Source: West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Approximately 57% of WMID female respondents moved only once since their immigration from Jamaica to the West Midlands. Of this total no less than one third of the sample moved to other residences within their initial locality, the remainder moving only very short distances to reside in adjoining localities.

33% of the total female sample had moved twice since their immigration to the region and 10% moved three times. Respondent '3' differs from the entire female sample in that the West Midlands was not her initial settlement area on entering the country. A broken marriage prompted the first move as she sought the support of her relations in Bristol

and her eventual re-marriage forced another move to Birmingham where her second husband resided.

Whereas the majority of respondents for whom the West Midlands was their initial settlement area, went to adjoining districts, when they moved, Respondent '7' moved from Bordealeay Green to Mandsworth, then to Edgbaston. Her first move was from an area which at that time had few residents of Caribbean origin and, consequently was held to be responsible for the lack of progress respondent was making in her attempt to establish a viable grocery shop selling Afro-Caribbean food.

TABLE 8.2

AREAS OF RESIDENCE IN UKMALES

<u>Respondents</u>	<u>1st Location</u>	<u>Secondary Locations</u>
1	Oldbury	Oldbury, Smethwick
2	Balsall Heath	Balsall Heath, Edgbaston, Billesley
3	Edgbaston	Smethwick
4	Handsworth	Handsworth
5	Smethwick	Smethwick
6	Edgbaston	Oldbury
7	Handsworth	Handsworth Erdington
8	Edgbaston	Edgbaston
9	Smethwick	Smethwick
10	Smethwick	Smethwick, UA Smethwick
11	Edgbaston	Edgbaston
12	Edgbaston,	Edgbaston Northfield, Castle Vale, Handsworth
13	Lee Bank	Edgbaston, Lee Bank
14	Smethwick	Smethwick, Edgbaston, Bearwood
15	Smethwick	Smethwick Edgbaston, Bearwood
16	Handsworth	Handsworth
17	Langley	Smethwick, Bearwood
18	Handsworth	Handsworth
19	Edgbaston	Edgbaston
20	Edgbaston	Edgbaston, Oldbury Smethwick, Balise Oldbury
21	Handsworth	Handsworth Winson Green
22	Edgbaston	Edgbaston, Oldbury
23	Smethwick	Smethwick
24	Six Ways, Aston	Aston, Handsworth Edgbaston

Source : West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

A total of 588 WMID male respondents moved once from their first residence. Of this, 540 moved to other houses within the same locality while 48 moved to a completely new locality - though geographically quite close to the original settlement. Almost 210 moved twice from their original place of residence and 210 had changed residential locality between three and four times.

Two male respondents actually interspersed their moves with lengthy periods living and working abroad before returning to the West Midlands. One of the male respondents 'sought to achieve a better standard of life for his family' by purchasing land in Belize (responding to a newspaper advert in England). He eventually took one of his sons to Belize to assist him in farming. Unfortunately, inability to obtain a market for his produce and mounting bills both in Belize and England, meant that he had to return to seek work in the UK.

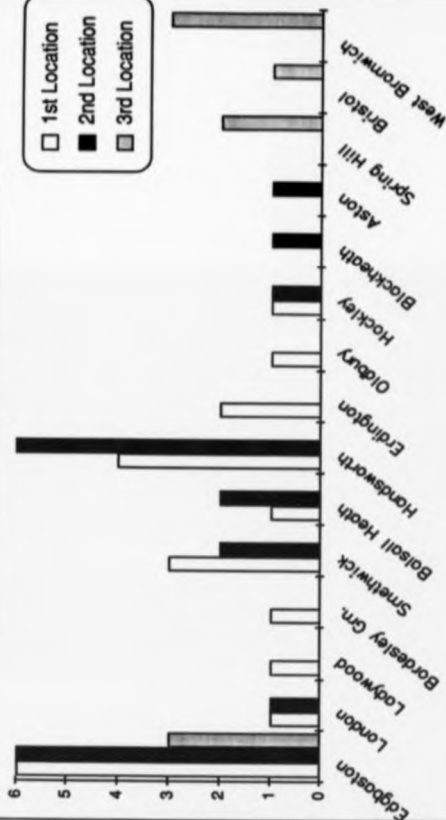
Respondent '10' on the other hand, had actually emigrated with his family to the U.S. However, after losing his job and with no foreseeable chance of obtaining another, he returned to the UK, took a room in a friend's home in the area from which he migrated and resumed working on the buses, while his family remained in the U.S.

Scrutiny of Tables 1 8.1 and 8.2 above reveals, however, that the majority of WMID respondents have only lived in the West Midlands since entering Britain. Importantly too, the majority of those who have moved outside of their immediate entry locality, have only moved very short distances. Graphs 8 (a) and 8 (b) shows the actual Locational preference area in which the moves took place. All the West Midlands areas represented are inner ring, and as indicated, Edgbaston and Smethwick appear to have initially attracted and retained most of the male respondents, while for female respondents, Edgbaston, Handsworth and Smethwick appear to have been more representative of WMID female settlement locations.

GRAPH : 8 (A)

SHOWING RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE AREA  
IN THE WEST MIDLAND OVER THREE LOCATIONAL MOVES

RESIDENCE IN UK : WMID (1984)  
WOMEN

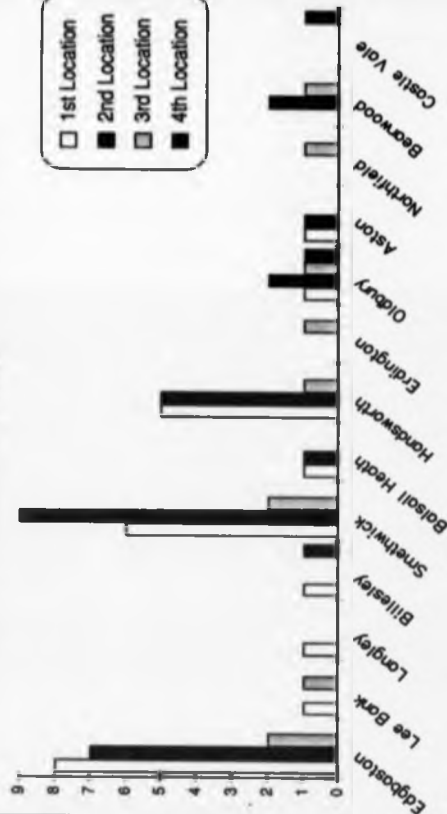




GRAPH : 8 (B)

SHOWING RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE AREA  
IN THE WEST MIDLANDS OVER THREE LOCATIONAL MOVES

RESIDENCE IN UK : WMID (1984)  
MEN



A feature which was found to be of particular interest was the belief of several respondents that it is possible to identify specific Jamaican parish groupings within West Midlands localities. Thus, Handsworth is thought to have large numbers of 'Claredonians'. 'There are a lot of people from St. Catherine living in Balsall Heath', and in Oldbury "you have a lot of St. Elizabeth people ... but it's mostly one family of people" (thought to originate from the district of Flegamen). (Also) "you have a lot of people in Wednesbury that come from St. Elizabeth, but lower St. Elizabeth." Likewise:-

If you go down to Smethwick there ... practically every other man you can talk to down there came from St. Ann. The reason for that is the District Iron and Steel - that factory. Because I think 95% of the black men who work at that factory come from St. Ann. Each man got a job there for his friend. I can talk about down there (Smethwick), because most of my time I lived down there. I've only lived in Oldbury since 71.

Mr. Linden whom we met in Chapter 16, was one such person from St. Ann who lived initially in Smethwick and was recruited to work in the District Iron and Steel factory. In explaining the reasons for this perceived spatial concentration along specific localities in Jamaica, he stressed:-

.... there was a few men who were from St. Ann ... I didn't know them from home ... I met them here ... quite a few of them... most of the immigrants were from St. Ann.

The reason I think is this ... I'm from St. Ann and I receive a friend he's coming from St. Ann. That friend receive a friend, coming from St. Ann and you see, more or less, all the people from your area is coming where that original one was .. friend receive friend and relatives.

Individual's desire and propensity to move, declines with protracted lengths of stay in a particular location. This may be due to an increase in networking socio-political economic structures which strengthens commitment to a

particular location. In spite of existing socially obstructing factors, greater perceived benefits elsewhere will be required to induce the individual to move. In the West Midlands, ethnic spatial concentration developed initially, as a result of a marked absence of official assistance in the settlement process. Significant dispersal has not taken place, either because they cannot afford to move - despite the unpleasantness of living in the midst of urban decay, or because, many choose to remain as a defence mechanism - against racial abuses.

As mentioned above, even where some degree of upward economic mobility has been achieved by a few members of the Afro-Caribbean communities, often, unlike their white peers, residential mobility is prohibited. Factors such as collusion by home owners and estate agents have served to prevent entry of Black people in specific localities, together with perpetual racist abuse if entry is gained. As a reaction to this, Many upwardly mobile middle class Black people appear to be choosing to remain within residential ethnic enclaves, either as a political action, seeing this as a means of contributing to their own group, or to signify their refusal to subject themselves to the indignities of racism by moving. In areas like Birmingham, there even appears to be an internal remigration of Black professionals taking place to areas of ethnic spatial concentration, such as Handsworth. Often they take over better quality homes in inner ring areas which, despite the inflow of Black people, had been retained as 'white dominated islands'; the quality of homes previously perceived to be too good as to deter flight of their white owners. Usually these residents

eventually leave as pensioners, to occupy less expensive accommodation - inevitably in a 'more desirable' suburban area. At this stage, Estate Agents appear to control the pecking order for these houses, and, if uncorroborated beliefs are to be accepted, access appears to be racially determined.

For many Black people, so great is the fear of racist abuse - whether from local white residents or the police, that they attempt to stay mainly in areas predominated by their own ethnic groups. This fear appears to be well grounded - especially in contemporary Britain. Ambreen Mameed pointed out that:-

'In 1984 and 1985, over half the young black men (aged 17-20) in the Metropolitan Police District of London were prosecuted for indictable ("serious") offences..... The exact figure is 521 prosecutions per 1000 of the black male population in this age group..... The corresponding figure for white youths is 193 per 1000 population (and).. for Asians, 167 per 1,000.' [13]

Enclaveisation inevitably facilitated the growth of support systems, and in their 1967 study of Sparkbrook, Rex and Moore stressed that few areas possessed the ethnic homogeneity as existed in American ghettos, and with the presence of 'different immigrant groups (leading) their own separate cultural lives and pursuing different interest .... (There was a) situation ... ripe for conflict.' However, they believed that 'conflict was mitigated to a considerable extent by the local Community Association which brought together the various groups in circumstances where they could pursue and negotiate about their different aims and interests without their differences with other groups being defined in a racialistic or violent way.' [14]

On a more micro level, in the initial stages of settlement, informal meeting places developed around service providers like the Barber shops for men. This has become one of the most important focal points for Afro-Caribbean men, where a trip to have one's hair cut can take up to three or four hours waiting on the premises. This is partly because until fairly recently and only to a limited extent, have local white hairdressers shown an interest in wooing Black customers. This recent trend is aided somewhat by few local further education colleges who now put on special Black hairdressing courses, which are largely patronised by Black people. Possibly most important, however, is the facilitating social role which 'the barber shop' plays. Like dominoes teams, Blues, Coach trips, and Mine Nights, together with Black Led churches, their ancillary activities, and other local ethnic community organisations, combine through self-help aims, while at the same time enabling nostalgic retentions of 'home pleasure'. Here interaction can take place away from the belittling and restraining power of perceived racist onlookers or activists.

Several of the respondents bemoaned the early days in Britain, when partly as a buffer against their adversities, they said they lived like 'members of one family'. Monetary collections were often made for new-comers to aid their speedy economic adjustment. These were spontaneous, individual expressions of comradeship, largely indicative of the absence of formal community organisations. In speaking of the help which earlier migrants extended to new-comers, Mrs. Fraser commented on her cousin who received many people from Jamaica. They stayed with her about a month, until they had found somewhere to live, at no charge to themselves. Continuing on this theme she stressed:-

I receive a few people ... you more help dem when deh come. The time when I come up here, I tell yu West Indian people was very good. You doan know di person ... when I come, di firs man dat give mi £2.00 is a man name Benji, an I doan know him! Anytime anybody come

... a West Indian - dat time it was tenant house - by di time everybody to come and seh 'how yu do?' ... yu might an up wid £30 ... £40. Eberyone of dem giving yu something!

Mrs. Fraser believes things have changed because people aren't living together anymore - they are now mostly in nuclear household units. She nevertheless, indicated that at times of christenings and funerals, such actions can still be observed.

To some extent, the demise of these spontaneous responses should not be seen as an introversion of Afro-Caribbean people or an adoption of the culture of individualism which is so rife in Britain, although to a certain, extent, some degree of the latter is inevitable. However, the development of self-help organisations, for whom social welfare provision is an integral duty, must be seen as an attempt to formalise 'giving' in a less subjective and more sophisticated way.

It must be stressed, however, that spontaneous giving is still very much alive in the Black community and can be seen in practice in the tradition of 'love offerings' within the church, whether for a perceived 'good worker', someone going on holiday, engaged in full time educational training which leads to an adverse change in the individual's economic circumstances, or just when someone who has been absent for a long time, whether because of illness or other hardship, returns. It is not unusual for that person to find that during a welcome-back handshake, his/her palm is pressed with 'paper money' in a very discreet way.

#### 'Pardners' : Provision for Rainy Days

Various writers on Caribbean migration have made reference to the informal loan arrangements called 'pardner' (partner), which existed in the Caribbean and still appears to have been retained in the UK, with the exception that the

amount of money involved has increased. This is usually likened to the early friendship society arrangements amongst British working class people prior to the establishment of a national social welfare system. These were essentially to meet pressing needs in times of social distress such as sickness or death in the family. More recently, with state welfare provision working class people who engage in such activities, do so mainly to meet the extra expense incurred in catering for Christmas.

The above comparison is, however misleading, in that for some people in the Caribbean, 'partners' were meant to play a much more significant day to day role than simply as insurance against 'a rainy day'. In places like Guyana, I have been told that groups, from amongst the poorest sections of the society, operate hourly 'partners', which means that each member of the partner will contribute a small sum - say the equivalent of 5p, to enable the drawee to purchase raw material - whether this is sugar for candy, ice and syrup for snow-ball/snow cone etc. goods will, necessarily have a rapid turn-over rate. Thus, within an hour the borrower should have made enough profits to repay the loan and have enough to purchase more raw material for the rest of the day's trade. Each member will be helped in this way.

The above would indicate that partners had an important economic role to play. They provided a ready source of credit, without the need to pay loan fees. In places where workers had no special skills and no permanent ways of making money, this most basic form of co-operative scheme was crucial for individual families' well-being, on a day-to-day basis. The most common partner, however, operates on a weekly basis.

As mentioned, these schemes were imported to the UK, and in the early days appeared to have been crucial in providing the down-payment on houses, and purchasing of furniture, when wages were low. Several WMID respondents stressed that

a partner group would live together, each draws accumulating his/her draw until there was sufficient money to pay down on a house. With each new member leaving to start up in his own house, help was further extended in that some tenants from the established household would leave to live with the new house-owner. It was assumed that the former owner was economically established enough to cope with a few weeks loss of rent, if replacement tenants could not be found right away. The new owner, however, needed such financial help in the initial house-owning stages, this would be gained from the rent of those tenants who followed him. These would be reciprocated until each member of the partner group had obtained his/her own house. Other ways in which partners have been used include sending monetary remittances, clothes and household effects to families and friends in Jamaica. More recently, they pay for holidays both back to Jamaica and increasingly, to other countries, mainly North America, but also within Europe itself, or to deposit as lump sum saving in the bank.

Many of the respondents were conscious that they would obtain interest on these sums if they were to pay them into the bank, or the post office. They explained, however, that often these are additions to the more serious forms of saving into which lump sums are paid, but on a less regular basis. To take these small sums - usually varying between £5.00 and £10.00 - to a bank or post office each week, would not be time efficient in their estimation. Partners, they stress are a compulsory form of saving - at least for the length of time it takes for each partner member to obtain his/her draw. They further stressed that this provided a fairly tidy little sum every ten to twenty weeks, which enables them to pay bills and meet other financial obligations without having to dip into their more formal savings. A very heartening factor, too, is that many were conscious of the positive co-operative aspect of partners, and felt this was more important than the profits they could make from such short-term saving. To some extent, partners have always played the role of credit unions, though they



are on a smaller scale and much more ethnic specific. None of the respondents knew of any partners which had white members and the majority had mainly Jamaicans. This does not mean, however, that restrictive practices were operating; at least this was not indicated in the responses. It appears to be simply that as members are often recruited by word-of-mouth, and amongst those who are intimately known to the banker and members, due to residential incapsulation, and limited cross-ethnic association, they are rarely in touch with others who possibly would have wished to join them.

Particularly in this period of post industrialisation and the mass unemployment which this has engendered, especially amongst Afro-Caribbean people, partners, no doubt play a significant role. Especially when considering that few people amongst these groups will have anything but the smallest sums left over for saving after meeting their day to day expenses.

#### Contributions, Regrets and Gains.

Jamaicans are fully conscious of the significant role they played in the economic recovery of Britain during the post-war period. They are aware too, that they are owed equity for the labour they expended, working very long hours for very little pay. These, contributions are, however, very well documented. Perhaps less documented is the migrants perceptions of other less obvious contributions which they are convinced they made. For example, pronouncements about unhygienic personal habits appear to be a common channel through which groups measure themselves against each other, as well as through which prejudicial views are expressed, both by receiving and immigrant groups. In chapter 1, mention was made of the recorded perceptions people retained about Jews and Irish. Of the more contemporary Black migrants, Catherine Jones quoted a Smethwick housewife as

declaring: 'Their habits are pretty terrible. They use the front garden as a rubbish dump, and heaven knows what they do in the toilets.' [15]

Jamaicans, like many other Afro-Caribbean people, claim credit for 'cleaning up Britain' after the War. This does not only refer to actual physical changes brought about through direct labour expenditure, but also in the encouragement of more hygienic personal habits amongst many members of the indigenous population with whom they were associated. It is worthwhile bearing in mind that in the absence of compelling alternative explanations, it is often one's perception of an event which determines responses and explanations. These subjective responses are important because through them it is possible to chart how an individual's perception of a phenomena is used to determine action.

A general recurring theme is the perceived lack of concern for cleanliness with eating utensils, and the many non-food related uses to which the kitchen sinks were put, such as washing the baby, clothes, and even emptying of the mop buckets. Other practices which were observed with surprise and scorn was the habit of leaving unwrapped bread on the door steps to be sniffed at by cats and dogs, not to mention attracting general 'germs', wrapping of fish and chips in newspaper, the habit of using saliva for numerous cleansing purposes, irregular bathing and changing of clothes, and a general apparent lack of concern for deportment amongst the working classes with whom they interacted daily. These early perceptions has meant that many Afro-Caribbean people have remained wary about taking cooked food from British people, often refusing to attend social functions where they might be offered something to eat.

I asked Mr. Hulme whether he feels he has contributed anything to the West Midlands to which he replied:-

Oh yes! We work and build this country... you have a few idlers, but the majority of us, we work very hard, and we build dis Birmingham town. When I came here, 1955, is pure bombed down houses you find .... We an di Irish ... immigrant build up dis town!

.... we taught dem how to dress ... we taught dem to eat good food.

For Mr. Hulme then, it wasn't simply labour which post-war immigrants contributed to the West Midlands. He believes Black people contributed much in an aesthetic way - whether this involved introduction of brighter and more adventurously styled clothes (and this is particularly evidenced in contemporary Britain), or with the introduction of a wider choice of food and spices - according to him 'good food'.

Of a less discussed but highly plausible claim, is Mrs. Fraser's views that she taught her neighbour household budgetting:-.

When I come to England, it was much different ... some of the English people dem wasn't really intelligent at all. I tink a lot of West Indian people show dem life ... You could see a ordinary English woman going to shop ... deh couldn't span deh money, deh would buy few sausage ... a slice a bacon ... We get our money and buy grocery an put it in di cabinet (bulk as opposed to single item buying).

Mrs. Burke ovva dere, her husband is a builder and she was working.... I wasn't working, but mi husband was working... and they get about twice (the money) what we got ... and I could tell you, by Wednesday, she would be saying ... 'Go and ask Auntie if she have two slice a bread for tea..... their money can't serve dem. The poorer class of West Indian people live better than di poorer class of English people.

This was the personal experience of one respondent; and while it is difficult to quantify or validate such claims, good neighbourly practices as these are perfectly feasible,

and have no doubt been taking place all over the country. Living in a consumerist society as Britain, ready-made resources - including tinned and packaged food, has meant that not only are they more expensive than fresh foods, there is also a restriction on the type of preparation which can be used. The housewife in a third world country, however, rarely has access to tinned food or the money which such purchases demand. They therefore have to be much more inventive in meal provision, and it is quite possible that some of their skills in this area have been passed on to neighbours, and friends.

It was inevitable that in a state of racial cleavage, as existed in Britain during the early days of black migration this century, idiosyncracies would feature strongly in generalisations which developed amongst both receiving and immigrant groups about each other. For the majority of black migrants, racism was a most humiliating experience, the effects of which were often submerged, only to resurface often in ways which appear unrelated. The following encounter between a respondent, Mrs. Bradford, and a little girl during a train journey, expresses the indignity which some black immigrants were forced to suffer through ignorance. She explained thus:-

The little girl on this train looked at me so badly that I had to ask her why she was looking at me so ... Is it because of my colour, because I was dark. And then she said "Is it true that you have got a tail?" So I said yes, I have got a tail. I said, haven't you got one? And her mother was so annoyed, she said "What do you want to find out if my child has got a tail for?" I says, "Well dear, if she hasn't got a tail I'm sorry for her because she won't be able to filth (shit)! Most of these people believe that because of the colour of our skin, because we are black, .. we are monkeys.

Ignoring or forgetting the indignity associated with such unqualified responses to a child - and often degenerating into nonsensical rhetoric, the respondent attempted to

address the parent through the child. She went on to explain another incident:-

There was also this gentleman, and because of his colour ... because he was so black, this lady didn't want this gentleman to sit beside her, so she put her bag on the seat. And so he took it up and he gave it to her... and she was pushing herself so much, until she couldn't push anymore, and so she crossed her legs over, and she was squeezing so much. And then, the more she squeezed up in the corner, the more he squeezed beside her. Until eventually he said, "Lady, have you ever seen a piano? He says, it has black and white keys. He says, well it takes the black keys and the white keys to make harmony."

That only shows that it doesn't matter the colour of our skin, all over the world we have different nations, and coming together, we become one, and there is harmony, you know!

Mrs. Bradford's conclusion seems to imply that despite her obvious indignation at being subjected to such humiliating overt forms of racism, she still believed it is good when different nations come together. In fact, she said: "I'm glad for this experience because you meet a lot of people everywhere, different nations, it doesn't matter the colour of your skin ... they're human beings."

The following list - in order of most frequently mentioned, identifies the most significant personal regrets which WMID respondents confessed to have about coming to the UK:-

Personal regrets as a result of immigration to the UK

- 1) Respondents believe they and their families would have been better off if they had remained in Jamaica.
- 2) The family would have been closer, had they remained in Jamaica, some broken marriages.
- 3) Immigration has not enabled personal ambition/careers to be realised.
- 4) Spouse/children have not adjusted well - too many cultural conflicts.

- 5) Concerned about younger generation Afro-Caribbean youths.
- 6) Concerned about lack of skill acquisition and low wages - especially for those who may be returning to Jamaica.
- 7) The cold weather and ill health causes some regret.
- 8) Concerned that Black people have not become more involved in politics.

It was significant that comparatively few respondents listed 'racism' amongst their major regrets. Without doubt Black people were aware of the presence of racism and the majority had no doubt experienced overt racism, though even today, most are unaware of the ways in which covert and institutional racism works. Why, however, was racism not mentioned high on the list as a source of regret for living in the UK? There are many, who like Mr. Thomas, came to terms with racism by pragmatically accepting that 'sticks and stones may break bones but words cannot hurt'. Thus, Mrs. Fraser stressed:-

'if you doan si mi, I doan si yu'. Some people seh in dis country dat white people doan like coloured people... if a white woman (man) out deh doan si mi, I doan si him ... I doan want to know him, because I count meself ... better than dem.

Racist behaviour was often thought due to ignorance, as emphasised by Mr. Thomas:-

... it never worried me much. .... they called me Sambo. I remember once I was working at the police hostel at Windmill Lane. Well the gaffer had to call a white man and sack him because he was drawing a little monkey on the wall and write Sambo underneath it and anywhere I was working on the building, he generally called 'Sambo'.... He was serious, but I generally think of him as ignorant so I didn't pay him any mind because only ignorant people do those type of things. Intelligent people don't do those type of things, only ignorant people; and if you look on those type of people to be ignorant, then you won't take much notice.

While it is true that ignorance may be largely responsible for much of the prejudicial behaviour amongst people in

Britain, it is not true that 'words cannot hurt'. Further, as has been pointed out above, racist behaviour is not only restricted to words. Physical abuse and police harassment, together with other local and national state repression has always been present and more recently is on the increase against Black people.

It could be that by the time of interview, respondents had come to view racism as an endemic feature in Britain and that it should be regarded as one of the hazards to be endured, and that speaking about it would not help. One aspect of the experience of racism, it should be pointed out, is the belief of writers like Foner, that it stimulates a positive self-awareness process. According to her:-

Much of the mystique of whiteness to Jamaicans has in fact been undermined in England. Because Jamaicans face such widespread discrimination .... and because white skin is no longer necessarily linked with other attributes of status and power, Jamaican migrants are not so awed by whiteness in England.... And because they receive unequal treatment on the basis of their skin colour, a good number are... seriously questioning and challenging the inferiority of blackness. [16]

Patricia Madoo, in explaining the consequence of racism on some Black migrants suggests that there, 'is an almost complete withdrawal - intellectual and emotional... He accepts their view that he is different from them but similar to all coloured people. He intensifies the degree of his contact with other West Indians .... He becomes a Black man, taking his side in the array of black versus white ... After this realisation is made most of the tension goes' [17]

While the above may sufficiently explain the pragmatic resolve of first generation Black migrants to Britain, not enough work has been done to determine the ways in which racism has negatively affected inter-relationships between Black people themselves. There is a general complaint that

often Black people do not acknowledge each other anymore in public greetings, and this is usually explained in terms of them taking on the practices of the English. This seems to be a particular complaint against younger generation who it is alleged will look away, rather than greet a Black person when passing.

To someone from a socialisation where it is 'natural' to greet each other, these appear to be disconcerting modes of behaviour. Of course, it could be that they are attempts at self-assertion, after all, why should someone be greeted because they share the same skin colour as another? Is not greeting a recognition that one is conscious of a common bond? If this bond is acknowledged as 'humanity' rather than ethnic affiliation, then surely the usual mode of behaviour is sufficient. Thus, if a person is or is not greeted, there should be no more significance placed on it if the individual is black instead of white.

There are, however, concerns by the psychologists that the experience of slavery and racism generally, has left Black people with a deep lacking of self-love and insecurity and that often this is portrayed in negative interactions between each other. Their behaviours are often reactions against the practices of their white hosts. Syed Ali Haqueer, in shedding light on one such reactionary behaviour, explained:-

The well-placed immigrants adopt the social customs and practices of the society ... to such a great extent that they look down upon their own compatriots. But paradoxically, one can detect a deep feeling of shame on their faces when they are confronted with a fellow-being who is engaged in some menial work.... This attitude could not be interpreted as class consciousness because the very same people are very civil and polite to white men doing the menial jobs. I found this colour antipathy shown by my own people the most pathetic of all prejudices. [18]



While Madoo, writing in 1965 explained one of the initial psychological constructs which migrants often perceive to be necessary for survival in Britain; that is a resolve to accept that he/she is 'a visitor living for a period of years in a foreign country, he can never lose himself completely among these strange... white people. He will have to return home.' [19]

Ali, on the other hand suggests another common 'survival construct', that is an apparent acceptance of the dominant groups' usual assertion that he/she is 'different from' compatriots. For the Black person, the 'difference' is determined by the degree to which he/she has managed to gain acceptability from white peers and this is preferred often only when the Black person has engaged in various acts of self-denial, shedding of their cultural habits and to a large extent breaking of affiliation with other compatriots.

As will be discussed below, Madoo's construct appears to be the way in which first generation Afro-Caribbean migrants have facilitated their settlement in the UK. By holding on to the hope of return - although almost everything of their existence seems to militate against and contradict this, they have, nevertheless, used it to barricade themselves psychologically against the worst ravages of overt racism.

Unfortunately, these mechanisms do not address the dilemma in which second and third generation Black people find themselves when the 'carrot' of returning home cannot be used as a psychological balm. It is also partly this which makes them look with impatience and disdain on their parents, stressing that they should have 'demanded' the humane treatment which was due to them. [20]

Despite the many regrets listed above, the majority of WHMD respondents felt that they had gained from coming to the UK. As can be observed from the list of gains below, 'experience' appears to be the most valued gain. Like the

list of 'regrets', they are listed in order of most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned:-

Personal Gains as a result of immigration to the UK

- 1) Gained experience - 'coming to Britain is like coming to College', Meeting different people.
- 2) Regular paid employment, gained financially.
- 3) Has been able to further education.
- 4) Travelling experience is always good.
- 5) Has brought the family closer.

It is significant to note that of those who responded to this question, 81% felt that the most valued thing about their migration to Britain, is the experience they have gained, both living in a foreign country and meeting 'new' people.

'Where Your Treasure is There Will Your Heart be Also' - Remittances

In writing about 'remittances' David White (1972) commented:-

"... remittances - money sent overseas - seems to bring out the worst in the people of the host country. If remittances are considered at all, they are thought of in terms of foreigners coming over from their country to our country, earning our money and sending it back to their country. And the feeling grows that if migrants weren't lucky enough to be allowed to work over here, their countries' economies would crumble and their families perish." [21]

The above quotation aptly describes the misconceptions and attitudes generated about 'foreigners' and their country of origin. It is undoubtedly true that remittances can have positive effects on a sending country however, rather than

speculate or add onto these views, it's sufficient to let the migrants reflect their views.

WMID remittances appeared to have had specific remittance recipient sources as well as forms. For example:-

- 1) Spouse/family members/guardians : These nearly almost all received monetary remittances, as is set out in Column 3 in Tables : 5.2 and 5.3 below. In addition, this group received clothes and a few consumer durables. Remittance to this source appeared to have been sent direct to recipients through the Post Office.
- 2) The second most common form of remittance - as indicated in column 4 of the tables - was for personal savings. This was more often sent direct to saving institutions in the home country - though at times, these were remitted to spouses with the intention that they would 'bank' it. In an attempt to prevent spouse and other family members using these monies in times of hardships, this latter option was rarely chosen.
- 3) Remittances were made for other occasions such as natural disasters, deaths and marriages, and festive seasons such as Christmas and Easter. On these occasions, remittance seems to be made more 'in kind' rather than money. Those immigrants who have kept in touch with their families see it as a duty to send home 'A barrel'. Barrels can take several months to prepare for shipping, and no sooner one is sent, another is being packed - ready for the next holiday period. Contents vary from toiletries, food, small utensils, bed-linen, and clothes (material and ready-made). Jamaicans ( as is no doubt the case with many other Afro-Caribbean people, are averse to wearing clothes which have been worn previously by others. Receiving 'Old Bruk' as hand-me-downs are often called, is seen as conceding to a level of poverty which many through pride will not profess - even to one's own family. And yet, 'old bruk' is often part of any barrel, yet rarely evokes traditional repulsion. This has much to do with the sensitivity of senders - remitting both new and used clothes, as well as the fact that distance removes the eventuality of recipients being seen wearing hand-me-downs by donors.

Those remitting seem to take pride in emphasising the generosity of their kins back home, stressing that their families will share contents with 'the district'.

- 4) The fourth reason for which WMID remitted monies, was to purchase or maintain property in Jamaica - or in the case of one respondent - Belize.

- 5) As respondents themselves go on holidays they take with them monies, clothes, groceries ( mostly dried food), and on rare occasions, a piece of domestic appliance will be shipped in advance to coincide with arrival in Jamaica.

Remittance 'in kind' often cloaks the actual value and level of total remittance to any country. If it were possible, careful accounting of the value of remittances 'in kind', as compared with straight monetary remittances, in the Jamaican case, would possibly yield a higher value in the former's case. This type of remittance, is more beneficial on a micro level, as individuals benefit more than the general economy. In fact, it could be dis-advantageous to small receiving countries, as they attempt to develop domestic industries - this is particularly true of indigenous textile industries. Further, as remittance 'in kind' takes pre-eminence, countries find that they are denied valuable foreign currency, which many come to rely on as their nationals emigrate to seek employment.

The following Tables : 8 [3] & 8 [4], indicate the recipients of remittances, remitting intervals and amounts both for the maintenance of families in the periphery as well as for saving:-

Table : 2 (3)

REMITTANCES(FEMALES)

Nos.	Remittance arrangements prior to emigration, Recipients & type of remittance	Remitting Intervals family	Remitting Intervals Savings
1	Remittance to parents for child : money & parcels	Bi-weekly	Irregular
2	Parents, for their welfare and to pay insurance Money	Monthly	Monthly
3			
4	No special arrangements made had no children - came without husband to accumulate funds	Irregular	Irregular
5	No special arrangements: Sent gifts at X-mas and money	3-monthly	None
6			
7			
8	Did not remit monies - family could afford : Did send X-mas parcels	-	No saving
9			
10	No special arrangements no remitted saving in last 5 yrs.	-	Monthly
11	No special arrangements gifts to female cousin, parcels for daughter's school needs.	f10-12 Irregular	Irregular
12	Only last 3 years		
13	Children left with Mother: money clothes and other commodities	Monthly	Irregular
14			
15	Agreed to send money	Monthly	Monthly
16	Children stayed with husband's parents - agreed to send money and clothes	Monthly	Irregular
17			
18	Sent to guardians : 3 children	Weekly	Irregular
	Boarding home for 2 children	monthly	Irregular
19	No special plans - money and parcels during holidays	2 weekly	None
20			
21	No special arrangements		Irregular

Source: West Midland Interview Data - 1984

Table : 8 (A)  
REMITTANCES  
(MALES)

Nos.	Remittance arrangements prior to emigration, Recipients & type of remittance	Remitting Intervals Family	Remitting Intervals Savings
1		Monthly	Monthly
2	To family	weekly	None
3	Friends and others	monthly	None
4	No special arrangements made - problems due to job loss	Irregular	Irregular
5			
6	Money sent	Monthly	
7	?		
8	Money sent at intervals	Irregular	6-monthly
9	No special arrangements		
10	Money sent	Monthly	None
11	No special arrangements	Irregular	2-weekly
12	Father financially able no prior arrangements	Irregular	2-monthly
13	Money sent	Monthly	Monthly
14	No regular remittance sent money on father's and sister's death	Rarely	None
15			Irregular
16			
17	No prior arrangements but sent money	Monthly	None
18			irregular
19			Monthly for 2 yrs. only
20	No special arrangements wife was looked after by his parents. Sent money wife's mother who was sore in need.	Irregular	None
21			
22	Sent to wife for family	2-Weekly	2-monthly
23	Sent to his mother	Irregular	
24		Monthly	3-monthly

Source: West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Remittances were often sporadic than regular. Many respondents said they remitted between £4.00 to £9.00 every fortnight, but that in real terms, the time-span and amounts varied, depending on financial demands in the Core. This point was emphasised by Mr. Thomas (a WMID respondent) who stressed:-

It all depends on how much you have ... Sometimes you send £10.00 .... it all depends on how quick you send it ... If you should send money four weeks and you didn't send for another few weeks, then you would actually develop on (increase) the amount; like when Christmas comes you would send a bit extra for Christmas ... you see what I mean?

Seeking information about the very sensitive area of money matters is fraught with difficulties. Not only is it possible that memories fade with the actual length of settlement in the Core, there is a definite chance that many respondents both males and females will often exaggerate the actual amount remitted. The former because he sees it as a comment on his masculinity if he revealed that the sum of money he sent was insufficient to look after his family backhome. The latter, not wanting to admit that her husband 'less cared' herself and the children when he 'was away'.

The following respondent, Vee, remained in the periphery with their five children, while her husband emigrated in 1951. We conversed thus:-

- I. What about money coming from England ... did it come regularly?
- R. Regularly.
- I. When you say regularly ... how ...?
- R. Is weekly.
- I. And how much ....?
- R. I'm ashamed to tell you that ....

I. No, don't be ... Five pounds a week for every week in 1981?

R. Right along.

I. ... and you couldn't manage on that?

R. No, I couldn't manage on that except I worked!

In actual fact, when this respondent's husband was interviewed he said he used to send £8.00 every two weeks to his wife at home instead of every week, as she claimed. When questioned whether this would have been sufficient to meet the needs of his wife in the periphery, he commented that wages in England was low at that time. Five pounds every two weeks would certainly have been insufficient to keep a woman and five children in Kingston, even in the early 1950's. This problem was even more compounded when we consider that this woman and many others like her, kept a home help (maid), either because, according to the respondent "I couldn't manage except I worked". Consequently, someone who had neither a special skill to offer, nor for other reasons could not/would not get other employment, had to be employed to look after her children and often undertake other domestic chores. In circumstances as these, a house-help could enable greater accumulation of funds, but the mother may also experience other problems such as petty pilfering or even inadequate caring of the child/children.

Secondly, home helps are often status symbols and, although this respondent did not admit to this being one reason for having one, this point could not be ignored, especially if one is - or aspires to be - amongst the middle classes, and one's husband gawn a foreign an sen bak money reglari! Unlike some husbands who desert their wives on emigration!

There are those who argue that receiving countries lose from the remittances made by immigrants. This thesis assumes however, that national income achieved during periods of high immigration is the same as that which would have been achieved without immigration. In the case of remittances



from the United Kingdom to the Jamaican periphery, the following Table gives some indication of the extent of this export of capital:-

TABLE : 8 [9]

## JAMAICA : AVERAGE REMITTANCES BY MIGRANTS 1955-1960

Year	Adult	Cumulated Adult Migrants (no return see)	P.O. Remit- tances from U.K. (net) £(000)	Avg. Remit- tances per annum per migrant (Estimate)
1955	17,056		1,399	
1956	16,721	33,777	2,487	
1957	12,384	46,131	2,782	£73.6
1958	8,934	55,065	2,834	£60.3
1959	11,365	66,430	2,884	£81.4
1960	20,630		4,192	£42.0
			£18,548	

Source: Davison, H.B. [22]

Davison's observations about remittances indicate that, not only were these reduced year by year, but from the beginning they did not appear to have been particularly large. He calculated that in 1960 the average remittance was less than ten per cent of annual earnings. This would go towards repaying loans and maintaining children, which he estimated was equivalent to about ten shillings (50p) per child each week.

Table : 8 [8] would suggest, therefore, that 90% of immigrants' earnings remained in the receiving country and could either contribute to inflation - depending on the spending and consumption pattern, or if saved in the bank or other financial institutions, could contribute to capital formation. But as the earlier arguments revealed, the spending and consumption pattern of these immigrants was relatively small.

It is, at the same time important to note that an assessment of Afro-Caribbean remittances, looking solely at Post Office despatches, does not reflect a true picture of the situation. For example, while it is no doubt true that those migrants at that time used the Post Office to remit monies home, this was not always through money orders. Many immigrants sent paper notes direct to Jamaica in letters, prompted either by the urgency to remit, or to forego inconvenience of going to the Post Office - not to mention the small charge of purchasing postal orders. All these combined to make taking a chance of sending uninsured monies risky, but calculatedly worth it. This meant, however, that monies remitted in this way, could not be effectively collated and included in any official accounting.

Deviseon, in his assessment of remittances ignored the banks as a remitting channel because of the "insuperable difficulty of disentangling current commercial and capital transactions." For this study too, it was found to be very difficult to obtain any meaningful response from the banks regarding 'remittances'. This was due partly to the above, and partly to their confidentiality code. It is necessary to note however, that remittances through the banks appear to have been the main channel of remitting monies for large transactions such as purchasing of a home or a piece of land back home.

This form of transacting businesses became much more common as immigrants, or their acquaintances, experienced for themselves or heard about others whose funds were misappropriated by their contacts in Jamaica. Fear of being swindled, therefore, as well as the preferably low handling involved in direct transferral of large sums meant that banks increasingly took predominance.

In addition to the above, there is no doubt that economic and political problems in Jamaica had a bearing on whether people remitted savings or not. Just as large sums of monies

are taken out of the country during times of an economic down-turn, people hesitate to send their monies out there for fear of the government appropriating bank funds. Many of the immigrants are not able to explain this in sophisticated political or fiscal terms, but their fears are, nevertheless, real. For example, Mrs. Power used to send home money to save every month and she claimed that amounts varied from between £10.00 to £30.00 each month. I asked her:-

- I) Were you always able to send back as much money as you liked?
- R) Yes ... at first
- I) Why do you say at first?
- R) You see ... before they start having problems with the government and thing ... I was willing to send, but after ... not.
- I) You mean problems with the Jamaican government? What kinds of problems?
- R) Political .... anything could happen ... I was told that they were trying to bring in this 'Castro government' ... and I mean, if you have your monies there .... But it's there now and it's no good to me because if I want it here I can't get it.

No doubt there were many people, like the above respondent who despite a desire to return home and had consequently decided to save her monies in Jamaica, was nevertheless deterred, due to adverse press report and various rumours about the political and economic state of 'back home.'

The respondent also highlighted the fact that it is very difficult, while remaining in the Core, to obtain funds from one's own account in Jamaica, as is the case in most developing countries. In fact, a point which has not been researched, but desperately needs to be, is the extent to which first generation migrants in this country are disadvantaged or indeed pauperised, due to repatriation of savings in the earliest days of emigration. The above

respondent indicated her lack of success in obtaining funds because of the requirement by the Jamaican government that accountees must be able to prove that their savings were earned outside of the country.

Another respondent, Mr. Amos, was 72 years old at the time of this interview. He had come to England, having left his wife, two sons and a house in Jamaica. His wife later joined him but his children remained in Jamaica where they were looked after by his mother-in-law. The respondent said that while his wife was in Jamaica he used to remit monies for her maintenance as well as for his savings. These sums were always remitted separately, the latter being on a regular basis, while that for saving was usually when he had amassed enough. He stressed, however that in reality, remittance for saving was at least every two months - though he often tried to send savings home every month. His wife died in 1976 and in accordance with her request he took her body home to be buried. This, he said was very expensive but he had to grant her wish.

He decided to sell his house and land in Jamaica after his wife's death, and this sale was expedited by his sister in Jamaica and the money added to his personal account out there. Unfortunately, the respondent became very ill and lost sight in both eyes for a period of time until he was able to obtain an operation for cataract. He also had problems with his heart.

Because of his disabilities, he attempted to send for his money in Jamaica - especially as he was finding fuel bills a little burdensome. At this stage he met with severe problems, as the Jamaican government required him to prove that money in his account was earned abroad. According to him:-

Can I get the money now! Oh, dear Jesus, I get a couple hundred poun ... but ... I go thru hell. Doctor haffe full up certificate .... if yu go out dere and yu going to do a business, yu have to get a plan before yu can get di

money. Otherwise, all yu can get is only \$50 or \$60 a week. They said yu won't get no more - and a yu own money!

Seh yu goin to build a house den, if yu got enough money? Yu get a plan an show it to di government planning, den yu can get di money ... away from dat ... there's no plan yu can get besiden dat ... an a yu own cash money in di bank!

The respondent did not want me to tape his 'private business', but he stressed that even as a pensioner, to get some of his money involved not only getting the doctor to signify that he was disabled, he also had to get a lawyer on the case.

It is surprising how adverse information such as those mentioned above spread in the immigrant communities. Further, every now and again it is rumoured that 'someone's land or property has been taken over by relatives or total strangers', 'particular individuals had gone out on holiday and was poisoned or beaten up, sometimes by their own relations because they wanted to get their hands on money the returnee/visitor is perceived to have! These are often based in hearsay, grossly inflated half-truths and outright lies; however, in the absence of correcting information they undoubtedly act as deterrents to remittance

It would seem, from the Jamaican case, however, that from as early as the later 1960's regular remittances were substantially reduced, as migrants realised that they would have to stay in Britain much longer than had originally been planned.

#### Settlement - A Reluctant Submission to Pragmatism

Initial settlement commitment, whether expressed as temporary or permanent, must alike, be viewed as transitory. The extent to which any group of migrant labourers can be said to be permanent - except in retrospect, is an impossibility. There are undoubtedly, those who - as

refugees, or economic migrants, suffering from the most severe forms of expulsion will, immediately on entry to a receiving country, claim to have made a permanent move. However, at best, in the initial stage, individual assertions regarding the permanency of immigration must be interpreted as a resolve on the part of the refugee/migrants, not to return to the undesirable situation he/she has recently left. Commitment to return can only be determined with the passing of time, and to a large extent depends on migrants' actual experiences in the receiving country, and the preparations they are able to make for return.

Those who claim only to have a desire to reside temporarily in the receiving country, often find that permanent settlement is usually an involuntary, but inevitable process. Like the initial propelling emigration forces from the country of origin, return is not simply motivated by economic factors. Experiences gained through the interaction of employment and residential processes, together with the nativisation of offsprings, often force a transition from temporary to permanent settlement; or at least a deferred return for a lengthy period - say until retirement.

Until departure is actually activated, the settlement pattern of self acclaimed temporary migrants may have no overt distinguishing features from those who are permanently settled. This is particularly so for labour migrants such as Afro-Caribbean, where, unlike those whose homes are geographically close to the receiving country and is therefore able to return home regularly, distance and expense prohibited such practices in the earlier years.

Home-link Retention as Settlement Determinant

An important factor in return migration is that migrants should have been able to maintain links and personally interact with their families and friends and life at home generally. Of 24 male respondents, 17 said they had maintained regular contact with their family and friends at home, while 13 out of 21 women claimed to have done so. 'Regular contact' varied from writing and remitting monies at least once a month, to every main festive season. Table 8 [6] below show the frequency of visits made by respondents. For the majority of them, first visits were made over ten years after emigration:-

Table 8 [6]Number of return visits made to Jamaica since emigration

Number of Visits Made					Males	Females
Once	..	..	..	..	10	9
Twice	..	..	..	..	4	3
Thrice	..	..	..	..	1	0
Four times	..	..	..	..	0	0
Five times	..	..	..	..	0	0
Six times	..	..	..	..	1	1

Source: West Midlands Interview Data ( 1984 )

Frequency of visits depends on cost effectiveness as judged by the would-be travellers, hence transportation costs, time allowed from work, together with available money for gifts are all taken into consideration.

In the early pre-1962 period the costs involved in migrants holidaying in the Caribbean were too inhibitive for the majority, when compared with their low wages, and the long term role which their wages were meant to perform on return. Consequently, few people went home on holidays.

Circumstances in the UK force migrants to engage in a level of materialism which a more itinerant migrant labour group does not have to become engaged in. Some WMID respondents, while attempting to meet these needs in the Core, have continued to make preparations for return. Five male respondents stressed that they remitted monies with which they purchased lands in Jamaica and one man and three women said they have actually purchased homes in anticipation of return.

Table 8 [7] below shows further migration intention of WMID respondents:-

TABLE 8 [7]  
FURTHER MIGRATION/RE-MIGRATION INTENTION

Nos.	Country of intended destination	Males	Females
		N= 24	N = 21
1)	Jamaica .. .. .	19	15
2)	United States of America .. ..	9	5
3)	Canada .. .. .	3	3
4)	Curacao .. .. .	1	-
5)	Bermuda .. .. .	1	-
6)	Bahamas .. .. .	-	-
7)	Belize .. .. .	1	-
8)	China .. .. .	1	-
9)	Undecided .. .. .	4	6
10)	No intention to leave Britain ..	2	3

Source: West Midlands Interview Data - 1984

Of those who expressed a definite wish to remigrate, Jamaica, followed by the US and Canada are the most favoured destination. Although it seems logical that older migrants would choose to return to their land of origin on retirement, it should be stressed, that despite the fact



that a large number of respondents were close to retirement or had already retired, they spoke of returning to set up in business, having remained fully conscious of their unachieved ambition.

Table : 8 [8] Below, indicates WMID's expressed further entrepreneurial intention:-

**TABLE : 8 [8]**  
**ANTICIPATED ENTREPRENEURIAL INVOLVEMENT**  
**ON RETURN TO JAMAICA**

	Men	Women
Set up Restaurant	1	0
Set up Agricultural Training Business	1	0
Set up Machinery/Engineering business	2	0
Open Grocery Shop	2	2
Purchase Sewing Machine for business	1	0
Set up Textile/Clothing business wholesale textile, clothes making/boutique	2	3
Purchase land/property/farm on a larger scale.	4	1
Set up business (unspecified)	1	1
Expand shoe making business	1	0
Set up Music Teaching business	0	1
Higglering	0	1

Source: West Midland Interview Data (1984)

Undoubtedly, the fact that many of the above ambition is simply expressing a desire to take up where they left off - for many well over thirty years ago! This indicates, to some extent the fact that they are ignorant of economic developments in Jamaica. Few would have been able to accumulate sufficient funds in the UK to enable them to effectively carry out their intentions.

It is logical to assume that, as the migrant consolidated his/her position in the UK, having accepted that the target time for accumulating funds could not be met, there would have been an increase in the number of people holidaying

back home. The 1962 Act, however, temporarily aborted such development in this area, by forcing people to use up their funds to bring over families and friends in an effort to beat the ban. It has further entrapped them, through the fear of being refused entry on their return, despite long residence in the UK.

With insufficient funds to remigrate and realise their ambitions, and the belief that they could not return to work intermittently to raise extra funds - as US farm work had enabled. Settlement has consequently occurred, but obviously not the result of a rational and timely decision.

First generation Jamaicans remain reluctant settlers in Britain. This reluctance is borne out of a strong sense of under/unachieved ambitions, enforced deskilling but possibly most of all, a deep feeling of unease which results from living in a society as a sub-class. The inequalities of this position is multiplied many times over because racial discrimination has resulted in Jamaicans - more than any other contemporary UK labour migrants - being greatly stigmatised.

To some extent, their experiences in the UK has had far reaching repercussions extending back into the periphery. Along with a high level of dis-satisfaction about life in Britain, many people experience an intense alienation with regard to Jamaica; this is partly due to the lack of regular return visits and a breaking off of communication which is generally believed to be the case with Jamaican migrants who came to the UK.

As far as retention of links with the sending country goes, comparisons between Jamaicans and other contemporary immigrant groups, are likely to be unrepresentative. For example, groups such as the Irish have been aided by the relatively short distance and related transportation costs. The next most recent large-scale contemporary migrant groups - the Sub-Asians, entered the British economy at a later

stage than the Afro-Caribbean people. This is significant in several ways. firstly, while many Asians are still bringing over their families, the majority of Afro-Caribbean migrants were forced to bring theirs over in the early 1960s, as they attempted to escape government legislation. Thus, apart from other factors mentioned above, their reasons for maintaining links with the sending society were weakened, if not eventually broken.

Further, as mentioned above the meagre wages of the early post-war days inhibited return flows - even for holidays. That the 'will' to return was stronger than the 'means' is evidenced in the greatly increased numbers of Afro-Caribbean people who now go for holidays back home. This could be viewed as symbolic of their improved financial circumstance - though many are forced to resort to loans to enable them to carry out gifts, and dress in a manner which they believe to be befitting people who migrated abroad. It could also be a sign of their resolve to defer or reject completely the intention to return permanently.

Another reason why comparing Afro-Caribbean migrants with other contemporary migrants in the UK is flawed, is the fact that often return for the former, involves going as a 'tourist', because for a large number of them, near family members have, themselves emigrated - usually to one of the North American countries. Unlike Sub-Asian or Irish therefore, there are no kin and friends waiting for them at home. No one with whom they have kept in touch and shared intimate migration experiences about life in Britain generally. Consequently, return even for holidays, can be an expensive and alienating experience.

The problem is further compounded by the emergence of a what might be called a syncretic culture, amongst people who have lived in the UK for a long time and imbibed - often unconsciously, modes of dress and behaviour. Foner's comment below sheds some light on this phenomenon:-

Jamaican migrants in England are caught between two worlds: they are no longer just like Jamaicans back home but they are also not exactly like, or fully accepted by, most English people. New cultural patterns as well as new patterns of social relations - neither wholly English nor wholly Jamaican - have emerged. .... the way Jamaican migrants come to terms with their new environment is more akin to a process which has, in the West Indies, been labelled 'creolisation'.

The physical characteristics of this creolisation - often identified by non-migrants in Jamaica in terms of strange clothing, speech and fast walking. These are believed to cause unease amongst on-lookers in Jamaica and this is transferred to the re-migrant/visitor who is suddenly a spectacle.[21]

#### Conclusion

For first generation, of whom this thesis is about, peripheralisation is characteristic of their settlement in the West Midlands. The above has demonstrated a situation of enforced marginalization in which most Black labour migrants in the UK have found themselves. This is believed to be largely responsible for the continued frustration which is implicit in stated return ambition, despite long unbroken periods of residence in this country. Their entry to the region was controlled as employers and trade unions often ensured their dispersal throughout particular firms, though they were always relegated to undesirable jobs. This latter practice tended to conflict with a desired mobility for local workers at immigrants expense, and a 'divide and rule' strategy to prevent, it was alleged cross-ethnic conflicts - though cross-ethnic affiliation was possibly most likely feared.

Employment is usually the determinant of residential location. Often, however, Black labour migrants found that blocked access to desirable areas forced them to enter slum and declining areas. Encapsulation has encouraged the

retention of imported practices, many which helped to maintain cohesion within the Jamaican community. For example, despite forty years in the UK, 'partners' are still prevalent and despite the apparent uneconomic sense of this form of saving, it has nevertheless been a useful source of capital formation for many who are denied access to 'official' loan agents. Although some informants felt that 'the closeness' of the community has been affected since the earlier immigration days, this camaraderie is thought to exhibit itself on ceremonial occasions or when individuals need help - such as at times of bereavement, or sickness.

Settlement and community development, however, demands physical as well as psychological adjustment and acceptance of the new situation. Possibly, most of all, however, is the extent of 'host acceptance' to facilitate mutual co-existence. Negative experiences in the UK has meant that for the majority of Jamaicans, like most Black labour migrants, psychological adjustment has not taken place. They remain trapped with unrealised ambitions, but never losing hope that one day return will be possible. The concluding chapter, as well as being a review of the thesis, will also address some implications of return.

Endnotes : Chapter 8

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- [19] Davison, R. B. : West Indian Migrants - Social and Economic Facts of Migration from the West Indies, 1962 (Page 64)
- [20] Burke, A. M. : Socio-Cultural Determinants of Attempted Suicide Among West Indians in Birmingham : Ethnic Origin and Immigrant Status. British Journal of Psychiatry, 129, (1976 : 261-66)
- [21] While I sat reading some old newspapers in the Jamaican Institute in Kingston during my return in 1985, I was approached by two men who wanted to know why I was reading old newspapers. On being told the nature of my research, they began to laugh and eventually, at my request, they repeated the belief that 'Jamaicans who return from the UK exhibit signs of sadness'. On enquiring why they felt this to be the case, they commented on the 'fast walking' of remigrants, the way they dressed (often in shirt, tie and jacket, in the hot weather. It is a well known fact that in the

Caribbean generally, 'fast walking' has traditionally been associated with mental imbalance. This perception is inflated when dealing with people who have not travelled and are unable to comprehend variations in the pace of life between a cold, highly industrialised country and a tropical/mediterranean one. These, consequently, can often lead to stereotypes on both sides. As for the modes of dress, Jamaicans are now much more accustomed to the casual - often flamboyant ways of dressing characteristic of the US than the UK. Unfortunately, unknown to the returnee/expatriate on holiday, unconscious internalisation of British ways has marked him/her out for ridicule for those who lack knowledge about that way of life in Britain.

Another feature which was pointed out as distasteful and 'quirky', is the belief that returnees who set up in business - such as grocery shop, display deep distrust for shoppers which is unsettling and enough to deter custom. The men in the Institute stressed that 'they behave as if everybody want to rob them.' As for the paranoid shop-keepers are alleged to display, could it be that the immigrants have absorbed and is now transferring reactions of which they once were the victims? Black people can't help but notice that often on entry to a shop in the UK, the assistants appear to become oblivious of all else, in their endeavour to watch - anticipating theft.

Returning to concerns of mental illness, Aggrey Burke has revealed a UK precedence for repatriating mentally ill persons to the Caribbean.

It is necessary to discover the extent to which this is taking place? Who are the repatriating agents - government or families? It is possible that with the present policy of de-institutionalising patients and placing the care responsibility on the community, families may be featuring more significantly in repatriation of mentally ill people. This is especially significant because of the latest Immigration Act and its proviso to repatriate unregistered people, including mentally ill and ex/prisoners.

**CHAPTER 2****CONCLUSION****RELUCTANT SETTLERS****Introduction**

The previous chapters attempted to locate the actual factors involved in the transition of a traditionally inter-regional itinerant labour group to a largely involuntary cross continental settlement. It is necessary at this stage to review the actual process of migration and in particular, to attempt an analysis of how the migration experience of Jamaicans in the West Midlands has contributed to the retention of a remigration ambition, despite respondents' residence in the UK for over thirty years, many having never returned at all. The chapter will then end by examining policy implications of the research.

**Migration : A Many Varied Process**

Various theories of migration have been explored to establish the actual initial stimulus for this particular wave of migration. That social and economic deprivations are indicative of a propensity to emigrate given the opportunity, is unquestionable. That such deprivations existed in post-war Jamaica is a truism. Further, the pulling force of Britain's post-war industrial reconstruction and resultant manpower needs cannot be denied.



I have attempted to illustrate, however, that despite the presence of such 'pulling forces' and the apparent correlation in the flows of migrants from Jamaica and movements of the UK trade cycle, as is indicated in unemployment levels, there were, none-the-less, other factors within the wide framework of restraining forces in Jamaica which contributed directly to a lag in the rate of expulsion, especially in the 1956-59 period. These included two large fraud cases, and a tropical storm.

The above debate set the scene for considering the notion of inevitability in the actual flow of labour migrants to the UK when the country was perceived to be open to them. This movement had as much to do with actual forces of attraction, whether state or familially generated, as with the end result of colonial economic under-development. The enforced dependency - (negative 'Peter Panism'), which is implicit in the stultifying socio-political-economic relationship between a peripheral ex-colonial country as Jamaica, and an advanced industrial imperialist economy - such as the UK - determined this end. Prior core-periphery relationships had nurtured a perception in ex/colonials that work, money and a better way of life were normal requisites in Britain.

That attempted mass immigration to the UK did not occur prior to 1950's was due largely to a belief that they would not be allowed to enter even if they tried to come. One respondent said she was taught in school that England was not a 'field for immigration'. For the majority, however, we can conclude that perceptual barriers, rather than knowledge, prevented any earnest attempts to migrate to England.

With the advent of War Recruitment and interaction between returning soldiers and the Jamaican public at large, perceptual barriers were broken down to the extent that a significant outward migration commenced. Migration scholars like Petersen believe accompanying movements are almost

inevitable - the movement once begun continues, as a relatively more attractive way of life is perceived. As with its initial propelling force, migrants perception about England, and life in the country generally, were to give added impetus to the flow. Figure 9[1] below is a reproduction of Lee's migration construct. It attempts to show that in any wave of migration there are facilitating and obstructing factors. These could be sufficient or insufficient:- transport facilities, capital and emigration/immigration laws. Over and above these, however, labour migrants, (and often refugees), would be motivated to enter a particular country, based on prior knowledge, perceptions of relatively greater wealth, together with perceived better life chances generally. Thus, the destination country is perceived more favourably than the sending country, in terms of a greater preponderance of attracting than repelling forces.

FIG. III. ORIGIN AND DESTINATION FACTORS AND INTERVENING OBSTACLES  
IN MIGRATION



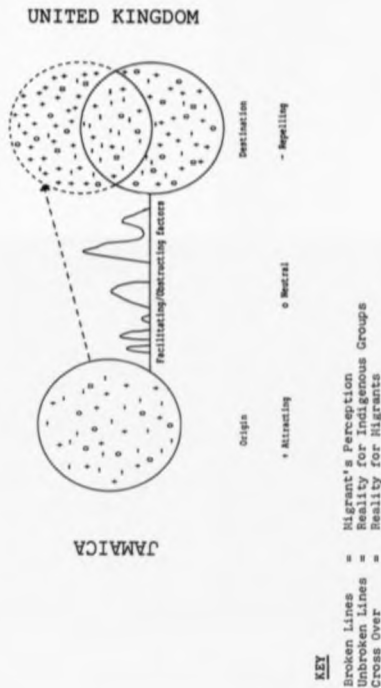
Lee's Model : Origin and Destination Factors and Intervening Obstacles in Migration  
cited in Anwar, M. : The Myth of Return - Pakistanis in Britain, (1979).

While Figure 9[1], is general, in that it can be representative of any origin and destination in a migration chain, Figure 9[2], as well as incorporating all the factors of the first figure, has an extra perceptual dimension. Within the broken circled section, a larger display of attracting than repelling factors are envisaged by migrants on entering the UK. This perception is borne out of colonial relationship - generated by inflated optimism as a result of lack of information, mis-information, as well as mis-interpretation of information, together with outright rejection of anything which contradicted original perception. In actuality, the foregoing chapters have emphasized that during the post-1945 reconstruction period, the entry of Black migrants to the UK, coincided with and at times encouraged a restructuring within the receiving country.

This restructuring took place in the labour market, as well as in housing and other social welfare provision. In employment, local workers who had received semi-skilled training to service War needs, found that with reconstruction programmes, and the inflow of relatively cheap migrant labour, they were able to obtain better employment, while migrants filled the resultant low pay vacuum. The bottom part of Fig. 9[2]' destination diagram, attempts to show that with the introduction of cheap Black labour, 'attracting' elements in the larger environment increased, for local groups, often at migrants expense - this is emphasized by a greater cluster of '+'s, the further away from the point of migrant labour incorporation. The middle section of Fig 9[2], where migrants perception and receiving groups' reality meet, a new construct emerges, which is indicative of the actual life experience of migrants. Here, repelling factors outweigh attracting ones.

A Variation on Lee's Model

FIG. 4.11. ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF MIGRATION  
WITH INTERVENING PERCEPTUAL CONTRAST OF DESTINATION



Many migrants found that often the wages they received were lower than they did in Jamaica. Compounding this was the injustice that often, due to racial discrimination they were forced to do work below their capabilities and paid lower wages than their white counterparts for doing the same work. Social advancement was often prohibited because of the lack of access to further and higher education, as well as inability to gain employment in areas with promotional structures.

We have seen that, largely as a result of racist contrivance, Afro-Caribbean migrants were confined to specific geographical areas, in the worst types of housing. In Chapter 6, it was stressed that recruitment of migrants from the Caribbean was often the prerogative of earlier migrants. These factors combined to achieve a spatial concentration, to the extent that, as mentioned above, some WMID respondents believed it possible to identify the settlement down to a district and village level, in various parts of the West Midlands and even outside the region.

As is the case with all groups of first generation labour migrants, kinship and support network which develop in their residential localities serve to restrict involvement/interaction with the indigenous groups. The case studies reveal that first generation Jamaican migrants in the UK are encapsulated and have largely retained an ambition to emigrate either to another country or return home. This could be used to categorise them as temporary migrants and consequently, alleged lacking in the aggressiveness which is believed to be partly responsible for the apparent success of so called 'permanent settlers' to the US, such as the Jews from Eastern Europe at the turn of 20th century. Such an explanation fails to account for the perceived success of Afro-Caribbean labour migrants to North American countries, who have not previously been referred to as 'permanent settlers.' In Canada it is believed that Afro-Caribbean

migrants are doing relatively well, when compared to their UK counterparts. This includes even those who enter the country as second-lap migrants, having spent several years in the UK. In the US, - begging forgiveness of my role here in the perpetuation of a capitalist and racist notion of 'success' - Foner stressed that:-

Jamaicans' entrepreneurial success in New York relative to American blacks has been frequently noted. Indeed, enough West Indians prospered in New York 'to endanger an American Negro stereotype of them as "Black Jews" - aggressive, efficient, acquisitive, calculating, and clannish' [1]

It could be argued that because the majority of Jamaican migrants to the US and Canada are alleged to be from a higher class/educational level than those who entered the UK, and further, because there has been a longer settlement of Black people in North America, both American Blacks, and others from the Caribbean, the psychological adjustment which this brings together with the support systems which inevitably exists to be exploited, makes entrepreneurial pursuit an easier and less traumatic process for later migrants. Implicit in this argument is the idea that in countries like the UK migrants often voluntarily or involuntarily suspend entrepreneurial practices - which for some had been a way of life, despite the availability of and engagement in paid employment. From the fact that so many WHRD respondents admitted to having tried to revive these practices, one is forced to look at factors in the society at large for ascertaining causes.

The attempt here is not to pedestalise capitalistic pursuits, it is more an attempt to explore factors which have prevented the complete self assertion of Afro-Caribbean peoples in the UK both as individuals and groups. Lack of engagement in working class capitalism, as a form of economic determinism, is but one expression of the stifling effect of Britain on the progressing ability of Afro-

Caribbean people. It also points to the source of solutions for Black under-development in the UK. These solutions do not lie in capitalistic goading of the government to force Black people to squander their meagre, but hard earned resources in such 'business' pursuits - because, as Chapter 7 shows, with the retainment of the status quo, this will be the inevitable outcome for the majority of working class people, as well as most, so-called Black achievers. Solutions for improving the position of Black people in Britain lie first and foremost in positive legislative changes to safeguard them against the worst effects of institutional and personal racism. Secondly, and alas, without a change in Britain's economic policies, anti-racist legislations can only mean that Black people will, technically, be afforded a chance to compete against the indigenous working classes, largely as members of this class - rather than a higher or sub-class - for their share in the scarce resources.

#### Can Broken Chords Once More Vibrate?

Braithwaite<sup>[2]</sup> summed up the feelings of Afro-Caribbean labour migrants most aptly when he stressed:-

In spite of my years of residence in Britain, any service I might render the community in times of war or peace, any contribution I might entertain towards Britain and the British, I - like all other colored persons in Britain - am considered an 'immigrant'. Although this term indicates that we have secured entry into Britain, it describes a continuing condition in which we have no real hope of ever enjoying the desired transition to full responsible citizenship. (Braithwaite, 1967)

Despite hundreds of years of Black people's presence in the UK and a greater concentration since the 1940s, Britain has remained unusually resistant to accommodating changes to

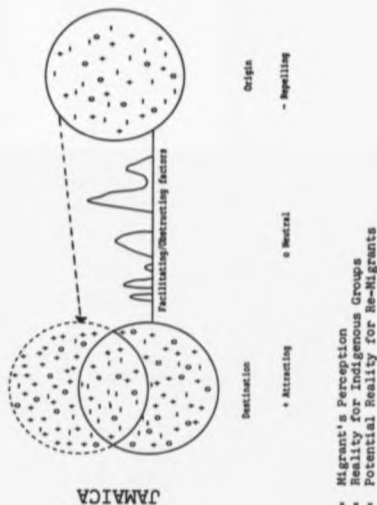


enable Black people to settle and develop modes of existence which, are separate from, but complimentary to a cohesive status-quo.

From the above information of the settlement experience and return ambition of respondents, it is possible to construct a model, Fig 9 [3], which is almost a complete reversal of Fig [2].

# A Variation on Lee's Model

FIG 9(1) ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF IMMIGRATION  
WITH INTERVENING PERCEPTUAL CONSTRAINT OF DESTINATION



## KEY

- Broken lines = Migrant's Perception
- Unbroken lines = Reality for Indigenous Groups
- Cross Over = Potential Reality for Re-Migrants

Fig. 9 [3] indicates few attracting factors for the migrant to remain in the UK. At the same time, because of lack or mis-information about Jamaica, a break in communication with family and friends, as well as a paucity of return visits, expressed desires to return are based on perceptions, informed by prior emigration knowledge. It is significant that Mrs. Fraser who we met in chapter 7, said that on her return to Jamaica she would live in her husband's parish rather than her own, 'because it's more fertile there.' Despite 29 years of residence in the UK, and non-involvement in agriculture, she has retained a traditional perception of means of economic subsistence to which she anticipates returning. The middle section of fig 9 [3] depicting the point at which remigrants enter their 'home' country, is more than likely to be similar to the construct in the departing core country, though the attracting and expelling/rejecting variables will undoubtedly be different.

Not enough work has been done on return migration. However, from a very small sample I carried out in Jamaica during 1985, it appears that specific problems were encountered by returning migrants due largely to ageing, and an increased need for medical care, lack of finances, and a wastage of resources attempting to set up in business without understanding the ramifications of the market out there. For example, a returnee spent all his money in chicken farming, intending to feed the chickens with scraps and the kinds of food they used on their few free range chickens prior to emigration. He said he lost everything, because he 'didn't realise you had to give them special food to fatten them up quickly.' Another respondent lost everything because her husband purchased a house through an Agent while he was still in the UK. Unknown to him, however, it was in the middle of possibly the most politically unstable part of Kingston. Consequently, she said, she was unable to remain there as several times they were threatened with guns. When they actually left, temporarily during the most severe political upheavals of the 1970's, they returned to find

their houses sacked, doors and windows appropriated, and most movable parts taken.

Housing schemes were built in Jamaica specially to attract returning migrants. It was generally remarked upon to me, however, that often these were built in dried up river beds, reclaimed lands, or generally in positions where inclemental conditions would create severe hazards.

#### Policy Implications of Research

If the expressed return and entrepreneurial intentions of MMID are representative of a general serious intent (and recent uncorroborated reports about large-scale remigration is rife), then there is a need to discover the extent of this resolve, and to explore likely consequences of this phenomenon on Jamaica, in terms of resource requirement, as well as possible contribution to the economy.

Whereas prior to late 1980's most people's desire to return could not have been realized because of the expense a move was likely to incur, today, due largely to the tremendous inflation in house prices many Afro-Caribbean people have found that on selling their homes, they will be able to afford the expense of repatriation. Caution is encouraged, however in regarding this as typical. The short-term boom in house prices resulted in phenomenal increases for London and the south east generally. In other parts of the country however, the picture has been the opposite both in terms of employment and property price appreciation. It possible, therefore, that remigration will export the characteristics of regional inequalities as exist in the Core. Those coming from the South East will be more prosperous, while those from the Northern regions will possibly need to rely on government aid. Further, although many Londoners could return as dollar millionaires, a fairly comfortable four

bedroom house in a desirable area of Kingston, already costs more than that. What, therefore, will be implications for Jamaica when returnees funds dry up? It is almost a certainty that few returning migrants will, as individuals, be able to contribute to the economy's development through the creation of employment opportunities.

However, like the chain migration which characterised emigration from the Island, it is possible that the reverse of this phenomenon can occur in a remigration bid. The above has emphasised that psychologically, most people have never settled in the UK. Despite material accumulations, this is possibly the most important pre-requisite for establishing roots. This, together with unemployment, and the problematisation of Black people in general, makes mass re-migration an ever present goal. Mass re-migration, however, despite the ambitions of many racists in Britain, is not in the interest of Jamaica or Jamaicans. As with the initial period of labour importation to service British industrial needs, Jamaica, like most sending countries, will once again be forced to shoulder the responsibility of financing social costs. Though this time, as well as bearing reproduction costs of its most skilled young people through the reduced but steady emigration to North America, it will be expected to cater for the needs of an ageing returning population.

Rain van Gendt in commenting in remigration stated:-

Although a massive migration of labour in the long run is most likely to be detrimental to the development of emigration countries, this does not imply that migration of labour should be prevented altogether. On the contrary, a regular migration and return migration of workers can be very advantageous for the social and economic advancement of emigration countries. Migration may endow the workers with qualifications tailored to the requirements of the national development process. Sometimes this may relate to tangible qualifications like the enrichment of some kind of development consciousness. The return of

migrant workers may even imply that employment is created for other national workers dependent on the way they capitalise upon their acquired skills and savings.<sup>101</sup>

Unfortunately, however, few Jamaican migrants to the UK have gained transferable skills - on the contrary, they have been deskilled to the extent that they may not even be able to regenerate - even if age does not prohibit - utilisation of original skills.

While it is not encouraged that Jamaicans in the UK should be actively deterred from returning - especially due to the intense degradation they have suffered as Black migrant labourers, it is nevertheless imperative that would-be remigrants are informed of the true state of affairs should they go. Further, rather than being forced to reclaim its dual citizenship rights in the event of an unplanned mass remigration, the Jamaican government would do well to inform its citizens about the realities of return.

Sending governments are usually loathe to explain such realities to their emigrant citizens. Indeed, there are countries such as Finland and Ireland who would see it in their countries' interests if mass-remigration were to commence. Jamaica, however, is already over-populated, and despite relative intermittent economic booms, it is incapable of absorbing - without serious economic and social implications, exportation of British social responsibilities.

Many sending countries may hesitate to deter re-migrants in their fear of losing much needed foreign exchange in the form of remittances. It was stressed, however, that remittances from the UK was comparatively small from the earliest days, and although no recent research has been done in this area, it appears that political upheavals in Jamaica

and difficulty in obtaining funds in times of need, have prevented people remitting savings.

There has survived, nevertheless a clear understanding and deep commitment to the position of Jamaica - as a developing country. Wider media projection to which migrants have been exposed in the UK, has helped them to contextualise the position of small countries like Jamaica within the world economic system. Several informants, on being asked whether they felt the Jamaican government should do anything to aid remigrants - stressed that it should be up to them to help the country than seek help. 'Jamaica can do much', was an oft repeated sentiment. Despite such sentiments, however, unless returnees are able to cater independently for their every need, they will inevitably drain the country's resources one way or another. This point will be emphasised most forcefully during times of chronic ill health.

With this continued commitment to development of the Island, therefore, it is possible that with government surety in the eventuality of a need for reclaiming of funds arising, political stability and sound investment proposals, it may be assumed that Jamaicans in the UK would wish to invest in the country rather than keep their monies in UK banks; this is tied up with an ever present fear of repatriation. Most importantly, if it were possible to develop government backed co-operative schemes - partnered by Jamaicans at home and those abroad - and geared specifically to migrant/remigrant needs, this would have many pronged advantages. An example of this could be a joint self-house building co-operative scheme, akin to the few which exists in this country; migrants could provide funds for materials - and possibly land. Employment would be generated in the periphery and even though people remained in the Core, some of their frustrations about unrealised economic ambitions could be eradicated. On top of this they would obtain a

house which would be available for use on holiday returns, rented as holiday homes, or become permanent residential homes if remigration does take place.

Despite the above, however, it is imperative to examine factors in the UK which have continued to instil a sense of 'unbelonging' and unease in first generation migrants who have expended the best years of their lives working for the UK. Despite expressed ambitions, the majority of first generation Black migrants will spend their last days in the UK, to this extent, therefore, the findings of my research may not be representative of the actual outcome. Indeed, Shelle and Blakemore concluded in their study of Ethnic Minority Elders in the West Midlands that:-

There is solid evidence to show that the overwhelming majority of ethnic elders intend to stay permanently in Britain, have not made specific plans to return, and that in the case of Afro-Caribbeans about two-thirds do not even express a general desire to live in another country.

Ethnic minority elders have a greater than average share of the disadvantages of being old in a society which tends to neglect the elderly, but there is not much evidence to show that the ethnic minority elders regret their decision to live and stay in Britain.

Perhaps one qualification should be made to this conclusion, however, in that it is the Afro-Caribbeans - particularly the men - who may need extra help to come to terms with a sense of loss of their country of birth.[4]

The latter part of the above quote, reveals a contradiction in Afro-Caribbean people's continued existence in this country. The older they become the greater the realisation that they cannot return, and for most this is interpreted as failures, on their part. Indeed, many would also be regarded as failure by those in Jamaica. This view is supported by a comment made to me by the home helper when I stayed with friends in Jamaica during 1985. She stressed that when people were going to England during the 1950's,



she was desperate to go, but was too poor. So desperate was she that herself and a friend began to save half-pennies and pennies - the only surplus they could afford, towards their fares. Though never being able to emigrate to Britain, however, and remaining a maid the whole time, she could not see any appreciable difference between herself and those who return from England to live near her!

The hurt arising from the knowledge that return would be a most humiliating experience for many, is compounded by the adverse situation in Britain today. Mr. Bates sums this up most poignantly:-

.... sometimes you get very depressed if you're a sensitive person and aware of things that you see go on and the kinds of attitude by government and society as a whole.... I wouldn't want to live here until I die - because I would fear what would happen ... that's what concerns me a lot now.

A lot of Jamaicans are getting old and I think the society would be very hostile to having these old black men walking the street with stick... Because even when people are strong and going on, people can be so hostile to them. I fear what would happen, especially if the economic situation of the country gets worse... we're being used as a kind of scapegoat for all the ills and failures of society - ... you can notice now, even certain laws are being passed ... parliament is geared up itself to pressurise our people to go home.

As I said to a guy, they won't repatriate you, they won't do it, because politically, the implications would be so (bad), but they create conditions in such a way that they force you out ... that is the kind of situation we find ourselves in now!

Another respondent, Mr. Thomas stressed:-

They are practically forcing us out in an unseen way, cause if you go down the road and you see 10 Jamaican men, practically the whole ten of them out of a job. Some of them will never get a job, because if the little sixteen year old can't get a job, how they can hope to get one?

At the same time, the above respondent is fully conscious of the futility and waste involved as many of these unemployed, older people attempt to immigrate in an attempt to seek a livelihood. He stressed:-

I'm in touch with a lot of people. I see a lot of people leave England and go to Jamaica and come back to England. I think that is waste of money. And the reason for that is because those people, they didn't invest when they was in England, before they start to invest in Jamaica.

It is true that savings rather than actual capital investment is characteristic of most Afro-Caribbean people's experience. However, unlike guest workers, Afro-Caribbean people have left the most of their earnings in the UK - which is a form of investment. As we have seen, few remitted large sums, whether as savings or to purchase property for their return. Moreover, if the experience of WMID is representative - and Davison's study corroborated this, remittances dwindled then stopped for the majority, several years ago.

It is possible, however, that along with the many discriminating obstacles, people have just not invested because they lack confidence in a society which continues to malign and threaten them - often with repatriation - and criminalisation of their young. This point gains reinforcement when consideration is given to the fact that most WMID were involved in entrepreneurial activities in Jamaica, attempted various activities in the UK, and have maintained entrepreneurial ambitions to be realized on their return. Further research is needed to discover the extent of alienation amongst first generation Afro-Caribbean people generally, and to devise policies for meeting their specific needs.

Countries of emigration usually lack power to defend their nationals in Metropolitan countries. It does not mean,

however that they are entirely impotent. What is required, however, is an international combination of emigrating countries. Demographers have been indicating a long term downward population trend and an ageing population in Western countries. This will necessitate massive labour importation in the near future. Although conjecture points to these migrants coming from Eastern European countries, and in the form of guest workers, they will, nevertheless have much in common with other exploited labour migrants. This is especially so if one accepts Castles and Kosack's assertion that:-

The character of the ascriptive criteria used by racialists to define the outgroup depends on what out group is available. Hitler took this to its logical conclusion when he said *Wer Jude ist, bestimme ich* (I decide who is a Jew).

As the European Community is consolidating its economic position - implicit in which lies exploitation of imported labour, so too, should emigrant/potential emigrant countries seek to form bonds to protect their national against the worst forms of exploitation.

In the case of countries within the Caribbean region, despite their obvious weakness, they can, nevertheless, demand better treatment of their nationals, particularly at this crucial international restructuring period. Whereas Britain abdicated her hold on the region in favour of the US, during the 1950's, overtures are now being made to former colonial countries, in an attempt to gain a market foothold with the region and buttress the inevitable consolidation which is also taking place in the Americas as a response to the EEC. The recent free trade agreement between the US and Canada is but one aspect of this consolidation, despite the latter's fierce efforts to prevent it previously, fearing it as a threat to Canadian sovereignty. Within the various packages being arranged, therefore, it is hoped that protection of migrant labour, and positive dual development strategies will be included.

### Summing Up

The thesis has attempted to reverse the traditional approach to migration studies by looking at how migrants perceive the migration process, and in doing so, shows how theoretical notions, or some of the accepted theoretical explanations of migration has to be modified when the migrants' views of the migration process is taken seriously.

By concentrating on a specific geographical area, and discussing the imperatives of the local economy, we can see how localised the response to the migration experience can be. However, even after the particular circumstances have been discussed and analysed, the fact remains that the receiving society, through its racist attitudes, can give to particular experiences, a notion of generality. What is interesting is the individual response to these - One can turn the table, another will go under!

There is no attempt to draw general conclusions, except that we need more micro studies in order to construct analyses from the bottom up.

Endnotes : Chapter 9

- [1] Foner, N. The Jamaicans (Pp.132) : Between Two Cultures - Migrants and Minorities in Britain. Ed. James E. Watson (1984), Pbn. Basil Blackwell, Oxford
- [2] Braithwaite, N. Cited in Fryer P. Staying Power : P.382
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